Old Pink 'Un Days

by J. B. Booth

OLD PINK 'UN DAYS

Photograph: Bassano

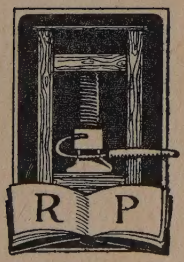
ARTHUR BINSTEAD

"The Pitcher"

OLD PINK 'UN DAYS

BY

J. B. BOOTH
("COSTS")



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"I have had playmates, I have had companions."

TO THE MEMORIES

OF

THE TALEPITCHER, THE DWARF OF BLOOD,
AND ROI D'ATOUT.

FOREWORD

SHORTLY after the deaths of Arthur Binstead and of Lieutenant-Colonel Newnham-Davis, it occurred to my colleague, Horace Lennard, and myself that some record of the amusing and happy days, when Pitcher was in his Paradise, and the Dwarf was tasting life *en fin gourmet*, might be of interest to the thousands of good fellows who had read their work. But war prevented a realisation of our idea, and now Horace Lennard is dead, and the task of chronicler has fallen to me.

For these pages I have relied upon personal memories, faded old cuttings, and old friends, and if, in any case, due acknowledgment has not been made, it must be imputed to lapse of memory, and not to ingratitude.

First, I must pay my debt of gratitude for their assistance to the relatives of my old comrades—Mrs. Binstead, Mrs. Lennard, Mr. W. J. Barwick, and Mr. Alfred Newnham-Davis. To Mr. William Mackay, the only surviving member of the staff of *The Sporting Times* before it became John Corlett's, my obligations are great indeed. To Mr. Luigi Naintre I give my deep thanks for his assistance with the chapter on Romano's; to Mr. Harry Preston, Mr. Fred Terry, Mr. Herman Finck, and to Mr. David H. Cain, the present proprietor of *The Sporting Times*, I am most grateful for their assistance; to Mr. R. S. Sievier I am indebted for permission to reproduce the Jabberwock's cartoon of Sir Alfred Butt; and, in particular, I wish to thank Miss Dora Lennard, the daughter of my old comrade, for her help throughout.

J. B. B.

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I

"No. 52"

John Corlett's Advice—Personalities—Pink 'Un Creations—The Ashes—The "Demon"—Tapping a New Interest—Service Readers—The Old Office—The Bolt-hole—A First Appearance—The Pitcher—Journalism the Only Life—The Racing Calendar—Funny Fred—The Pitcher's Cabman—Walter Slaughter and the Telegraph Clerk—The N.S.C.—Phil May—Teddy Bayly—"For the Good of the House"—An Over-inflated Boxer—Jim Jeffries' Future—Tommy Burns and Financial Modesty—Making Sure—The King's Pheasants—The Vetoed Film—Boxing Veterans—Fitzsimmons as Press Agent—John L. Sullivan and King Edward—The Hero-worshipper—More Financial Modesty—Money and Enthusiasm—Poor Value for Money—Major "Sugar" Candy—Carpentier and Beckett—Lloyd George Again—Boxers' Kisses—A Protest.

THE age of John Corlett, proprietor and "Master" of the "Pink 'Un," was an age of personalities in journalism, and there was no more personal paper than the *Sporting Times*.

The one scrap of advice the old man gave to the journalistic beginner was invariably the same:—"Cultivate a personality in your work, and stick to it."

So it came about that the writers with whom he surrounded himself became, under their pseudonyms, if not exactly household names, at least names which were familiar in every mess, in every club, and in the places where men foregather in the ends of the world. The nocturnal adventures of the "Shifter" and of "Peter Blobbs" in the regions of Covent Garden and of Denman Street were read by hosts of unknown friends in the back blocks of Empire; an experience, real or apocryphal, of "Pitcher" or of "Gubbins" in Romano's bar would bring letters from remote hill stations in India, and from the wilds of South America; and "the Dwarf's" dinners made mouths water in both hemispheres.

And above all, was Corlett himself a personality.

It was not alone that he was an admirable judge of racing, and had a command of style which enabled him to write a racing article which was read with equal pleasure by the expert and

the novice, but he had in addition an admirable *flair* for the literary needs of his highly specialised public.

The racing man, the man of the theatre, the man of the club, above all, the man of the world, composed his public, and it was a critical one, demanding, above all, two things: accuracy and good fellowship. There was a sturdy independence about the old man's views which commanded and obtained respect, and when he vociferated against Radicals and the Grand Old Humbug, as he invariably styled Mr. Gladstone, keen Liberals read him with amusement, and teetotallers, like Sir Wilfrid Lawson, smiled at the motto which headed the "Notebook" of "Vigilant and the Wizard"—"High Toryism, High Churchism, High Farming and Old Port for ever!"—and took the paper.

Several words and terms were brought into general use through their appearance in the Pink 'Un. Champagne was for many years called "Boy"—not "*the* Boy"—in consequence of a story told of King Edward, when Prince of Wales, on the front page; "mashers" and "bounders" were created in the pink columns; the "oof bird" and "spoof" were also added to the popular vocabulary by pink pens, and the word "tart" was first applied to a certain class of lady by little Shifter many years ago.

Most famous of all, perhaps, the mythical "Ashes," accepted as the prize the English and Australian teams strive to gain or retain possession of, were the invention of the *Sporting Times*. They came into existence in this way. In 1882, the English team, which included "W. G.," Barlow, Ulyett, the Hon. A. Lyttleton, C. T. Studd and A. P. Lucas, lost a memorable game at the Oval by 7 runs.

England had been set 85 to win. Would they get it?

Spofforth was confident, having great faith in himself, and Murdoch and Giffen were cheerful as they stepped on the field to finish the game. "Spoff" looked more like the demon that day than he did as Mephistopheles at a previous fancy-dress ball—and behaved like one.

"Irresistible as an avalanche," said George Giffen, "he bowled his last 11 overs for 2 runs and 4 wickets, the finest piece of bowling I have ever seen."

And England lost.

In the next number of the Pink 'Un an "In Memoriam" notice appeared, surrounded with black borders:

"In Affectionate Remembrance

of

ENGLISH CRICKET

Which Died At

The Oval

On 26th August 1882.

Deeply lamented by a large circle of sorrowing friends and acquaintances.

R.I.P.

N.B.—The body will be cremated and the ASHES *taken to Australia.*"

In the whole match Spofforth took 14 wickets, 7 in each innings, for 46 and 44 respectively, and nine of his wickets were clean bowled.

Lunching one day in 1917 at the Great Eastern Hotel in the City, my fellow "Pink 'Un," Lennard, and I were introduced to a tall, athletic man with a keen face and hair turning grey. His name was Spofforth, and when he mentioned that he was an Australian:

"Any relation to the great cricketer?" asked Lennard with interest.

He smiled, and said modestly: "Well, I used to play a little cricket myself once."

And then we learned that we were talking to Fred Spofforth himself, the "Demon Bowler," the idol of the cricket world, and the lion of Lord's some forty odd years ago.

When he retired from the cricket-field, and took to building up a great business, he became lost to the public eye, and many people assumed that he was dead. One day, he told us, he was present at a discussion on Australian cricket:

"Poor Spofforth!" observed a stranger, "he's dead, poor old chap!"

"What did he die of?" asked the "Demon," with great interest.

"Drink, I heard," was the terrifying answer.

It became the ambition of all sorts of good fellows in every social circle to contribute front page paragraphs to the "Pink 'Un," and to each aspirant old John had a word of advice and suggestion.

"Now, what I want you to do," said he to one such, "is not to go wasting your time and abilities—not to mention my money—in the Roman's *all* day, but to step out into the world, and tap, as it were, some new interest; go north, go south, west, east—anywhere, and see what you can pick up."

So the ardent beginner hied him into the N.W. district, and plodded sadly around suburbs. The next morning, he came back weary and footsore to No. 52, and handed in the following "Sporting Note":

"Wednesday, 12.20 noon. Saw Mr. Zangwill learning to ride a horse in the Finchley Road at 11.45 a.m. Went to bed early, and suffered from nightmare."

The "Pink 'Un" was such a personal paper that I may be forgiven a personal note in my account of my first introduction to the society of the good fellows with whom I was to spend many happy and irresponsible years.

Like the paper, the old offices at 52 Fleet Street—now pulled down and replaced by a gigantic commercial establishment—were unique.

A steep, narrow staircase—absurdly narrow for the bulk of the editor and proprietor—led to the first floor over the tailor's shop; a first-floor known to numbers of good friends who made it a port of call on publishing days. A cubby-hole of an outer office, with a small ground-glass window for "Enquiries," could tell many tales, and, once the enquirer was approved, the faithful clerk in charge, without leaving his stool, pulled a string, which, in some complicated manner known only to himself—for it was his own invention—released the door leading to the editorial quarters. The enquirer then found himself in a narrow passage leading right and left. On the right, towards the roar of Fleet Street, was the door leading into the room occupied by the staff; a low, square, wood-panelled room, lit by gas, the "wall" on the street side being of glass, the lower half coloured to obscure the view from the tops of 'buses. On the panelled walls hung a small collection of "personal"

records and portraits. Next to a framed receipt for income-tax, paid, after court proceedings, by "Peter Blobbs," was an enlargement of a photograph of the young Marquis of Hastings, lying on a sofa, at the foot of which sat his wife, the former Lady Florence Paget—a photograph which recalled the historic meeting at Swan and Edgar's and the elopement by the wrong entrance; that bright and by no means particular spirit, Hughie Drummond, occupied a place of honour; then came "Ballyhooley" Bob Martin, "Treasure" Dalbiac, and a reproduction of Fred Archer's indentures. A poem by "Doss Chiderdoss" reflecting on the intimate lingerie of the domestic servant having brought a protest from one signing herself the "Parlour-Maid," accompanied by a be-ribboned sample, sample and letter hung framed by the old-fashioned marble fireplace. A large group of the printers' "Wayzegoose," comprising the bearers of many names familiar to devout "Pink 'Uns" occupied a place of honour, and a corner of the wall was devoted to "the graveyard"—photographs and records of good friends who had gone.

In the centre of the room was a large dining-table, with ink-pots and the usual writing paraphernalia, and round this, each in his armchair, sat, or were supposed to sit, the staff. In my experience there was not very much sitting. Pitcher himself refused to sit, and for his benefit a high standing desk was placed near the window, at which he corrected his proofs.

At the head of the table, his back to the window, sat Colonel Newnham-Davis—the Dwarf—as editor-in-charge, and to him, on publishing days, the procession of printer's lads delivered proofs, taking the corrected ones from a little wire tray over the mantelpiece.

Out of the editorial room a door opened directly on to the staircase,—a bolt hole which could tell stories of the cheery, impecunious days, when the name of Shifter graced the Forfeit List, in respect of the entrance fees of a horse he had never seen, belonging to an unknown, and the voice of the income-tax collector was all too often heard at the enquiry window of the outer office.

For some years I had contributed odd paragraphs and articles to the paper, but when Corlett invited me to join his editorial staff I had yet to make the personal acquaintance of Arthur Binstead—the Pitcher. My first day's experience of the editorial room may not be unamusing to the journalistic be-

ginner of to-day, though I fear it will not be instructive, for I am given to understand that times have changed in newspaper-land.

I was allotted an armchair at the square table at which to correct my proofs, and one by one, the staff dropped in. They were all men of punctual habits; eleven was Dwarf's hour, and as the Law Courts clock struck twelve, Pitcher, the last arrival, invariably made his appearance. Between eleven and twelve the bang of a door, a well-known voice, and the sound of a large body moving down the passage to the left in the direction of the tiny sanctum at the back—a sanctum just large enough to contain a roll-top desk and a safe bearing the legend: "NOTICE TO BURGLARS. THERE IS NOTHING IN THIS SAFE. WE GO RACING."—gave evidence of the arrival of Master.

In later years, on the door of the little sanctum was a plate:

CHANCELLERIE

DE LA LEGATION

DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE

SUD-AFRICAINE.

This was the door-plate from the office of Dr. Leyds in the Rue de Livourne, Brussels, what time Leyds was President Kruger's European emissary during the South African war. Some Englishmen removed it one dark night with a chisel and a champagne opener, and sent it to the museum at "No. 52."

The new boy of the family, I looked forward with interest to my first meeting with the Pitcher, for, as with most young men of that time, Pitcher's works occupied a prominent place on my shelves. All sorts of mental pictures of this great humorist and keen observer of the life of London had formed themselves in my mind, but no definite result had been attained, and I was unable to visualise him as tall or short, fat or lean, old or young, dark or fair. A certain exuberance of spirits would, I judged, be sure to characterise him, but beyond that I was prepared for anything.

The door opened, and a tall, well-built man—Corlett and the Dwarf were both big men, and Pitcher was also a six-footer—with a quiet nod to Newnham-Davis, walked to the standing desk by the fireplace, and was about to open his letters when the Dwarf stopped him to introduce me. This was the Pitcher.

As I grew to know him, I often smiled at my preconceived ideas of his appearance and his character.

Poles apart from mere foppishness, a more fastidious man in his dress and in his manners than Arthur Binstead never existed. As I look back, I seem to see him oftenest in immaculately cut, black tweeds with a thin white stripe, a dark, perfectly tied tie with a pearl pin, and the most wonderfully varnished boots,—boots varnished with a preparation the secret of which he was extremely proud,—and the whole man conveyed an impression of the most meticulous neatness.

From a grave, rather pale face, twinkled the keen eyes of the humorist, the philosopher and the observer. A short, decided speech, and a precision of phrasing also marked him.

The stream of boys bringing and taking proofs slackened, and the callers began to arrive. Teddy Bayly had walked down from Romano's; Walter Dickson—"Dickie the Driver"—and a soldier called to see Dwarf; a man wanted to take Gubbins out to lunch; "Old Energy" and Master had already gone across the road to Anderton's, and "Rooty Tooty" was busy with a Belgian owner of race horses. Punctually at a quarter to one the cashier entered, and laid on the editorial table before each chair a small white envelope. This concluded the ritual of the morning.

The first to leave was Dwarf, who preferred to walk to his lunch.

"Romano's at one-fifteen, Pitch," he observed as he left; "tell John I have reserved the corner table, and bring Booth with you."

I thought savagely of the precious years I had wasted in reading law, sitting for futile examinations, taking a superfluous degree, and could have kicked myself. Journalism was obviously the only life for any intelligent person.

At Romano's everybody seemed to know everybody else, and Romano's narrow bar, where Pitcher and I lingered for a moment, was crowded with bosom friends and would-be bosom acquaintances.

At lunch, anxious waiters hung on the Dwarf's words, and the entire personnel seemed to breathe again when some special dish he had ordered for Master was approved a success, for John was essentially a lover of plain English food, and his trial of a new "creation" was always in the nature of an anxious experiment for the chef.

And so leisurely back to Fleet Street, where the proofs were beginning to appear in page. One by one the pages were passed and initialled, and there remained only the all-important "Note-Book" page, with the racing and the "tips."

Dwarf's work done, he prepared to leave; Master appeared from the inner sanctum and took the empty seat at the head of the table, with Gubbins and "Rooty Tooty" on either side; the serious business of the day was at hand, business in which the frivolous writers had no share.

The moment came; the clerk entered with the three copies of the sacrosanct *Racing Calendar*, and the three experts flung themselves upon it. After a studious silence, the air was full of giving and receiving pounds, of beatings by lengths and half-lengths, of finishes up hill and down hill, and form, form, form.

"Going through the Calendar" was a serious business and no levity was permitted.

On one historic publishing afternoon, there had been a certain lack of hilarity owing to John Corlett, in a sudden fit of stinginess, not having taken the staff out to lunch as usual. And as he sat at the office table in a characteristic attitude, turning over the leaves of the "Calendar," searching for inspiration, and balancing his pince-nez on the fingers of his right hand, he observed to Shifter:

"I shall not be sorry when we get the weights."

"Possibly not," replied Shifter sententiously, "but in a peaceful London street at three in the morning carol-singing amounts to a ruddy nuisance, and, last year, the bounder that was chirrupping 'The Mistletoe Bough' on our doorstep just as I was going to bed with my dress clothes on, got the contents of the ewer right slap down the back of his neck. As a matter of fact, I detest all Christmas observances!"

Master eyed his chief humorist curiously for a moment,—and then rigidly left him out of the last stirrup-cup at the "Cheshire Cheese" before catching the 4.20 for "Bottom-barley."

"Doing anything to-night?" asked Pitcher suddenly. I replied that I was not, and was invited to a chop at the National Sporting Club.

"We'll leave them to it," he observed, nodding at his editor-proprietor and the little group of experts, and together we left the office, and walked towards Covent Garden. As I grew to know him better, and when he became one of my closest friends

in the worlds of journalism and of life, I realised the unusualness of his behaviour. Rigidly conservative in all his ways, even to the smallest personal matters, Arthur Binstead did not as a rule seek friends among new chums. His circle was a carefully chosen one; it comprised all types, from a millionaire to a convicted burglar, but each member of it had been chosen strictly on his merits, and, as he passed through middle-age, he was slow to admit newcomers to his intimacy. His habits were settled; he did not desire fresh adventures in friendship. That he made an exception in my favour, as I grew to know him, I grew to regard as a great honour.

We reached the Tavistock and he paused.

"Do you mind waiting a few minutes?" he asked. "It's my day for a hair cut."

Another of his rules of conduct was to be put in force. On a certain day of the week in every month his hair was cut by a certain barber at the Tavistock at a certain hour.

I sat while the barber performed, and discovered that operator and patient had their rules. For a time the work proceeded in silence, then:

"How's the arm? Rheumatism better?" asked Pitcher.

"Funny Fred," as he was known to readers of what William Howlett invariably referred to as "The Popular Pink Paper," became thoughtful. Stepping back to admire the effect of a peculiarly delicate touch of the scissors:

"Ye wouldn't expect—in the ordinary way—to find solicitude in the shavin' saloon, would ye, sir?" he asked, and paused for no answer. "Well, sir, all las' Monday me right arm was racked by the exquisite tortures of acute rheumatism, an' I fairly winced with the pain occasioned by jerkin' the aromatic, soothin' lather on the observant customer's jowl. I says 'observant,' advisedly, for presently, the mindful and sympathetic gent—a stranger to me, sir,—arrests the operation, an' observes: 'Look 'ere, I can make this lathering much less painful for you. Just you 'old the brush still—horizontally—an' I'll waggle my chin against it."

And he proceeded to choose a finer comb with thoughtful face.

And a similar character in his way was Pitcher's usual cabman.

"If ever there was a big an' noble-hearted gentleman, it was 'im as lay in that long oak box," I heard him once observe to

his fare, describing the obsequies of a favourite publican, "an' I give you my word, Mr. Binstead, that if such a place exists as 'eaven, he ought—well, damme, he oughter to be in the vice-chair!"

And for one fleeting instant the vision of Paradise took on a more convivial complexion.

"The only enemy he had was—the music pirate." Well might these words compose the epitaph of that amiable companion, that gentle good fellow, and accomplished composer, Walter Slaughter.

A friend of the staff of Corlett's paper from the early days when he was musical director at Drury Lane, it is still a matter of record that good-natured Slaughter almost, but not quite, quarrelled with Pitcher, and over a cabman. And the cabman was Pitcher's own pet, particular hansom driver, one Richard Gilbert, who was wont to boast, in his own words, that he had "carried" the Talepitcher for more than twenty years.

It was on a sunny Saturday afternoon, and the humorist was being driven back from Alexandra Park races by the faithful Gilbert, when halfway along the Camden Road was found Walter Slaughter, strolling. The composer was picked up and when Regent's Park was reached, he grew ecstatic over the condition and speed of the clinking old bay mare Gilbert used to drive.

"Did Pitcher," asked Slaughter, "want the cab on the City and Suburban day?"

The writing man did not, so the musician made his bargain with Gilbert to hire the self-same "shoful" (lately done up) the same harness (brand-new), the same bay mare, and a gauze curtain to exclude dust, all for thirty-five shillings for the day, a wet day to cancel the deal.

On the City and Suburban morning outside the portals of "52" stood Richard Gilbert, dejected and afoot.

"Your Alexandra Park pal's fairly done it on me, Mr. B.," he complained, aggrieved, adding (and he could use his fists), "I feels like layin' for 'im round about the Brecknock an' handin' 'im a couple. Not on'y causes me to stand down to-day, but adds a sarcastical insult to the bloomin' injury! Read this!"

"This" was a telegram; it read:

"Can't take you to Epsom to-day (Laughter)."

"On'y think of the sting of the *laughtyer*!" insisted Gilbert

sourly, and for a time the writing man failed to grasp the hidden humour of the telegraph clerk, who had beheaded "Slaughter" —and put the body in parentheses.

As we entered the club, Pitcher became reminiscent.

"I remember coming here one Monday night," he said, "with Phil May, and just as we reached our seats by way of the corkscrew staircase on the prompt side of the proscenium arch, 'Punch' Somebody, of Mile End, handed a fearful smash in the jaw to 'Kid' Something of Stepney, whereat 'Kid' fell in a heap and lay low, with his eyes closed, as though registering a vow that he would never speak again above a whisper.

"'What contest is this?' I asked Bill Baxter, one of the club seconds.

"'Semi-final of the Heavy-weight Novices,' said Baxter.

"'And what,' asked May, 'does the boxer of this round get?'

"'Oh—about thirty bob,' replied the erstwhile pride of Shoreditch.

"May turned his cigar over three times with his tongue, reflectively. Then he said:

"'What dam'd queer ideas some chaps have of earning a living!'"

That's so: but isn't the whole scheme of Creation dam'd queer? The world, which is two-thirds water, was, we are told, "made for man"—who has no gills.

And what a host of memories the mention of Phil May's name wakes. Few greater masters of the difficult black and white ever drew breath, and the marvellous economy of his line gave rise to many absurd legends as to his alleged slap-dash methods. As a strict matter of fact, in his early days May was in the habit of making elaborate studies—no man, however great a natural genius, could have attained to his technical excellence without infinite pains—and notably, when he was in Australia, working for the *Sydney Bulletin*, did he draw carefully from the life that interested him.

The blacks interested him particularly; on more than one occasion he went out to the aboriginal camp at La Perouse to make studies, and, one day, while working on a large and careful drawing of a mixed group, an old colonist and his wife, who took a great interest in the blacks, appeared on the scene and admired his work. May introduced himself, and while he chatted with the husband the shocked lady rushed half a dozen

of the more *décolleté* gins into a gunyah, and made them don old print gowns.

May, finding that half of his models had disappeared, asked the meaning of it, and the old colonist called loudly to his wife:

"Charity, my dear! Charity! Mr. May wants the ladies!"

When the "ladies," smirking in old print gowns, reappeared, May gasped.

"I say, old chap," he whispered, "your wife is damn well named. Isn't it Charity who covers the multitude of gins?"

And it was one bright April morning that Phil May, in company with Pitcher and two or three other good fellows, was standing at Mrs. Driver's famous old Oyster Bar in Ryder Street, when, through the open door, May caught a glimpse of a passing black, with a top hat as glossy as his hide, and a superlative frock coat. May grinned appreciatively, and the coon, taking the grin as a tribute to his sartorial perfection, beamed a recognition, as he swaggered on.

Grasping a bill of fare, on the back of it the artist swiftly recorded his impression, remarking that such happy self-satisfaction deserved whatever permanency black and white could confer. The drawing was passed round, and was instantly bought by Pitcher—for a cash payment of a dozen oysters.

And here it smiles upon you.

It was a night of stories and experiences, and one story that was told illustrated the value of a knowledge of the art of self-defence—to say nothing of a little timely aggression.

A few evenings previously, as some ten or eleven stone of male heart and muscle was walking quietly home he was set upon by two brutes relatively as big as Notting Hill Gate and Shepherd's Bush, but when he shed his overcoat and "got going" it was easier than it looked.

Five minutes later the rubber-soled policeman found two bruised and battered bullies lying across the pavement, and the first thing one said to the other, on sitting up to take notice, was:

"Gor'strooth, Bill, *I took 'im for a gentleman*!"

Teddy Bayly, I remember, joined us over our chops—and there was, and is, no finer chop to be obtained in all London than at the National Sporting—and it was due to a habit I then possessed of scribbling on backs of old envelopes and old unreceipted bills that I, an earnest young Boswell at that time,

THE COMPLACENT COON

Drawing by Phil May

was able to preserve happy memories of that and many other merry meetings. The talk that night ran on that quaint fistic celebrity, Bob Habbijam, and Teddy dived into history.

A practical man was that same Habbijam, and he had as little use for lawyers as for policemen. For a time he had a partner in the shape of "Shah" Horn, the boxing-instructor, who died in 1904. But things went anything but smoothly; indeed, early on the morning after the "stupendous assault-at-arms" which inaugurated the association, a constable, passing along Newman Street, observed Bob with a brand-new screwdriver enthusiastically taking down the equally brand-new brass plate inscribed with the brand-new firm's name.

"Here, sergeant!" said Habbijam, flinging the plate into the road, just in time for a van to pass over it, "You're a legal witness of my act an' deed (scrunch! went the plate), "the somethinged partnership is now dissolved!"

Nor did any legal complication follow.

And here, lest I forget,—which is as good a reason as any other,—let me set down one more instance of the practical side of the little pugilist as Pitcher once told it to me.

Some years ago one of the strongest and most fearless pugilists of this or any age, the late Jack Harper, kept a tavern in Brent Street, Hendon, to which the Fancy largely did resort. In particular did Bobbie Habbijam foregather there, for Harper and he were inseparable, and might fittingly have been termed the Pylades and Orestes of Boxiana. But the hostelry's main patron, at the sound of whose carriage wheels the red carpet was spread—metaphorically, of course—was Mr. Charles Blacklock. At one of Charlie Blacklock's periodical visits it transpired that the event of the coming Saturday was to be a football match between the Cricklewood Dribblers and the Golder's Hill Sockers, and he instantly, "for the good of the house," invited both teams to dine with him after the decision of the match.

"Well," Habbijam would relate, "Jack's idea of preparing that dinner was simply ridiculous! He actually thought he could cook meat enough for sixty hungry men in a little bit of a gas-stove that was barely big enough to take a gammon rasher and two eggs comfortably, while his missis was boiling 'em a dish of potatoes. I told him it wouldn't do at all; and finally we went over to a contractor at Islington, and had the whole thing sent over piping hot in a van, at so much a head. The

Guv'nor was there that night, positively beaming with delight at the sight of the ' muddied oafs ' pitching in, and, just as they brought in the fish, he called me to him and he said very quietly, ' Bobbie,' he said, ' have a couple of cases of the best wine in the house opened, and let it be served to them in tankards.' When Jack heard the order he was simply aghast. ' Why ale—sixpenny ale—is their proper tackle ! ' he groaned; but the Guv'nor was firm about it. Down into the cellar I went, and I and the potman got busy with the case-openers on a couple of boxes of Pommery. In a very few minutes the trays of brimming tankards were carried up and a tankard set by each chap's fist. And how d'ye think it went ? What d'ye think they made of it ? "

And the audience would wait expectantly.

" Why, the captain of the Dribblers buried his snout in his tankard, drained it to the last drop, turned to one of the Socker's half-backs, sitting next to him, and exclaimed, with evident satisfaction, ' Gor'strooth, Harry, old Harper's changed his brewers ! "

That even in those dear, dead, ante-bellum days beyond recall, too much money was given for mediocre boxing shows was one of the tenets of little Habbijam's faith, and he had a favourite instance of the average pugilist's notion of easy money.

Once an over-inflated boxer of the fourth or fifth class applied to Bob to put up a purse for a contest for which it was extremely doubtful, to say the least of it, whether the paying public would absolutely jostle one another in the attempt to procure standing-room, and suggested that the trifling sum of £75 would meet his views.

" Well, that's won it ! " ejaculated the maître d'armes; " why, when I was your age I fought Bill Yeller, of Birnin'am, for fifty bob. We'd twenty-two rounds on the Tuesday, when the mob broke up the ring, fourteen more on the Wen'sday when I won the stake,—an' I came out losin' thirty-five shillin's ! Seventy-five quid—*you* ! "

" Into the night "—(or somewhere else)—" go one and all."

But boxing champions come and go—most of them to seed. As a faded cutting from an American paper which lies before me sings in lurid prose of Jim Jeffries, so is the fate of the most of them:

" Jim Jeffries, the Californian, is unquestionably monarch of the brute creation. The hairy-breasted gorilla of the Pacific

Slope has twice beaten the trained chimpanzee Corbett to submission; has twice hammered the speckled kangaroo Fitzsimmons to a conditon of admiring meekness; has twice fractured the dorsal fin of the marine broncho Sharkey; has caved in the slats of the human turnip Rublin, and reduced lesser brutes to various conditions of physical wreck. Jeffries is in exactly the pitiable condition of Alexander the Great, who grieved himself to death because there were no more worlds to conquer. Jeff. won't grieve himself to death. He will use alcohol as a substitute for grief, and the effects will be even more deadly. A year or so before he is thoroughly pickled by the rum treatment Jeff. will meet some gawk from Squashville, who never tasted anything stronger than sweet cider. About the fourteenth round the champion will be officially counted out."

Aye, and in his seventy-sixth year I, who write, saw Jem Mace, erstwhile Champion of the World,—taking the tuppences at the door of a scrapping booth at the Fun City at Olympia.

But talking of boxers' remunerations.

Once upon a time the lessees of a big caravanserai, called, say —Dreamland—conceived the notion of bidding for the match between Tommy Burns and Jack Palmer, and all the parties sat down together in the back room of a London newspaper office to talk over the terms.

"Would you prefer a purse, or a percentage of the receipts, Mr. Burns?" asked one of the Dreamland partners.

"Now, I'll tell you," said Tommy. "I think this fight is goin' to attract attention an' draw big, an' I'm willin' to gamble a little bit,—just a little teeny bit. I don't want a guaranteed purse; I'm willin' to fight for a percentage."

The Dreamlanders rubbed their hands stealthily and gleefully at the strange and wholly unexpected consideration shown them by Burns in not asking them to put up a fixed sum, and one of them purred: "And what would you consider a fair percentage, Mr. Burns?"

"Eighty-five," replied the modest pugilist, and two would-be promoters fell over backwards.

But Tommy Burns had his own little ways of making sure.

When he went over to Australia to pursue the search for Australian gold and, incidentally, fight Bill Squires, an Irishman addressed the chauffeur of a large car which was standing outside St. Patrick's Cathedral one Sunday morning.

"That's a foine car; whose car is that?"

"It's mine—I'm driving Tommy Burns."

"Where is he?"

"Inside, at Mass."

"*Hwhat*! Tommy Burns at Mass! Then God help Bill Squires!"

It was, by the way, when Burns fought Moir that Royalty betrayed a marked interest in boxing, for Sandringham rang up "Peggy" Bettinson at the N.S.C. and enquired the result of the match, and was, of course, given all particulars. On the following evening "Peggy" received with the King's compliments a brace of plump pheasants, and for the rest of the week was reported to be cogitating deeply whether he ought to send them to the cook or to the taxidermist.

Those were the early days of the "movies," and a reproduction of the Burns-Moir fight on the screen drew large crowds of admirers to the Alhambra, but, after all, not all the world takes a vital interest in boxing men and their little unpleasantnesses. George Scott, the then manager of the great Leicester Square theatre, in order to watch the picture and gauge the effect on his audience, ascended to the upper circle, and found himself standing immediately behind a hayseed sort of person.

"Aye, they're graand pictures," commented the man from the country, as the black shutter fell, "but does thee happen to know, mister, wot the blazes they was fightin' about?"

And, talking of "fight films," it is a curious little historical item that in 1907 the King's sons went to see Sam Langford, the black, smash the life half out of "Tiger" Smith, the silly sailor-lad, who, despite reverses, would persist in leading with his right fist.

And the films were warmly vetoed by authority—because the young Princes could easily be seen in the audience! We have progressed since 1907!

Age does not wither nor custom stale the boxing veteran.

For instance, in bygone days, every little while a challenge used to be thrown to windward by old Bob Fizsimmons, who was in his boxing prime when at New Orleans he knocked out the Anglo-Australian plasterer, Jim Hall.

Fitz was his own press-agent and needed no other.

His advertising devices ranged from pet bears to wrestling ponies, and once he took to collecting precious stones and investing each gem with a history.

"What d'ye think of this di'mond?" he would say. "It's valued by Tiffany's at two hundred thousand; and was given me by the Rajput of Goroo. Here's another—even a better coloured stone—just a keepsake from the Shah of Persia—his former nibs, of course."

Fitz's very last bait for paragraphs was weeping in public.

At Hammerstein's music-hall in New York one night, when presented to the audience during the progress of a pugilistic "sketch," he bowed his head, and wept for five solid minutes by the prompter's Waterbury. He said the referee of the mock fight resembled Jim Corbett so much that it reminded him of brighter and happier days.

Then, while he indulged in a "real good cry," the boys in the gallery chorussed lustily:

"Oh, dry those tears,
An' end those fears,
Life was not made for sorrow!"

A touching little scene, calculated to gladden the heart of the press agent.

Nowadays, the exploded "pug" takes to the pictures; in a former age, the vaudeville stage was his refuge, and old John L. Sullivan toured for years in a playlet called "Heavy Hearts and Horny Hands"—or something like it.

And John L. took himself mighty seriously as a histrion. Irving's death much affected him, and he took a full five minutes to absorb the news.

"Hully gee, but it's a great loss," he observed at last. "There'll be dam few of us left presently."

Perhaps old John L. deserved a special championship belt for one of his last feats—he became a temperance advocate. And when to the native modesty of the "pug" is added the ultra-bashfulness of the prohibitionist, the mixture is complete.

"Boys get impatient and won't listen to temperance talk," he wrote on one occasion, "but they've got to listen to John L. Sullivan. Boys, let whisky alone. I'm writing this at the request of a friend and admirer of mine who saw me box before the Prince of Wales. That Prince is King Edward of England now, and I mean to see that these articles of mine on whisky get into his hands if I have to send them to him myself. Like a good many other men, he will be benefited by them. When I met him I talked affably to him and put him at his ease, and I

have no doubt he will be glad to hear from me after all these years. Boys, remember my words, and give whisky the mitt. I thank you for your kind attention."

The *Oshkosh Eagle*—or whatever the paper was—never chronicled King Edward's reply.

And still on the subject of money and enthusiasm.

It happened one night in a certain "school of arms," where a good deal of latitude was allowed if excitement seemed lacking, and a couple of middle-weight novices were slogging away as only novices can and will who haven't had a couple of quids for years. Presently an agonised howl went up, and one of them appealed to the referee.

"Phoo!—Guv'nor—he *bit* me!"

"Did he, my lad?" replied the unruffled referee. "Well, what abaht it?—aint *you* got no ruddy teeth? Box on!"

And after that, all was, as C. B. once said, "agreement, except in opinion."

Anent the poor shows put up and the poor value given for good money by heavy-weights with big names and bigger purses, a story which went the rounds about the time of the Burns-Roche fight at the Theatre Royal, Dublin, is perhaps as good as any. Having paid two guineas for his seat, one of the audience from the country was leaving the theatre after Burns had put his antagonist to sleep in the space of 1 min. 28 secs. An impecunious friend met him outside, and asked him what the "battle" was like.

"Divil a know I know," was the answer. "I saw them have the gloves put on, an' they faced one another, an' then I got a desperate sneeze, an' when I recovered from that, begob, the fight was over!"

But the complaint is no new one.

After the quick collapse of the fight between Peter Jackson and Smith, Corlett turned to Major "Sugar" Candy and asked:

"Is it all over?"

"It is," was the melancholy reply, "and it has cost me £25 a minute."

When he was in the 9th Lancers, "Sugar" Candy was about as lively a subaltern as ever wore the uniform of the Queen. In the way of sport he could do better than most people, and in Cork they still point out the hill down which from Government House he drove a four-in-hand. At that time he was as

good-looking a man as there was in the British Army. For extremely staid society, he was far too lively: "You never know what 'Sugar' will do next!" was a remark one of his hosts made—with some reason. In his early days he was a great man at the Grand Military Meetings, and rode many winners. His only daughter became Duchess of Newcastle, and as keen in the hunting field as ever her father was—which is saying a good deal.

"Sugar's" Jackson-Smith record was closely rivalled at the last Carpentier-Beckett unpleasantness by the enthusiast who dropped his programme as the men advanced to meet one another in the first round. He stooped to pick it up—and missed the fight. When he raised his head Beckett had received his quietus. But from the beginning the Frenchman's swift victories over English boxers caused perturbation among the paying and non-paying public.

As the first man to leave the National Sporting Club on the Monday night that Carpentier burst into fame by smashing Wells ploughed his way through the waiting thousands, one question was bawled at him from every mouth.

"Carpentier—one round!" yelled the struggler in answer.

For five seconds the silence was such that the hissing of the urns in Lockhart's sounded like the sea on pebbles. Then the dejected voice of a pessimistic Tory from the outer fringe took up the tale.

"Gorstrooth! an' blimey if Lloyd George ain't done it on us again!"

Inside the Club, the tumult provoked by Wells' futile attempt to explain his sensational defeat had died down, and insatiable youth approached authority.

"I say, Peggy," it blathered, "it's too early to go home. Haven't you got any more?"

The imperturbable Bettinson for once lost his self-control.

"More!" he sneered bitterly. "More! How much can you hold? You're the only beggar here that hasn't got a bellyfull!"

And ere we quit the subject of boxing, permit me one little protest.

It is written that when Moses went to meet his father-in-law, "he did obeisance and kissed him," and the same nasty habit still obtains amongst most great rulers, many professional footballers, and some boxers. Pedlar Palmer, for instance, invariably slobbered his man; a couple of middle-weights

recently sickened a part of their audience by publicly embracing, and once upon a time, during the Army and Navy competitions at the National Sporting Club, there was a Tommy who, on being proclaimed the winner of his heat, ran across the ring and kissed his opponent. Instantly fine old Jack Angle, who was referee, sprang to the ropes:

"Drop that filthy and disgusting practice when you box here!" he cried. "Shake hands like men, and nothing more!"

Which, after all, is an old protest which might bear occasional repetition.

But we have wandered some way from the record of my first publishing day at "No. 52," a day which introduced me to the company and the friendship of many good fellows now gone, and was the prelude to many light-hearted and irresponsible years, in a light-hearted and irresponsible world.

And now, if you please, we will drop the unpleasant first person singular, and the subject of my wholly unimportant doings, while I attempt a brief and all too imperfect chronicle of those good days and good men that are, alas, no more.

II

THE DOCTOR

Birth of *The Sporting Times*—Dr. Shorthouse—The Inaugural Address—" The Outsider "—A Lucky Prophecy—Gladiateur—Room for Another Tipster—Increased Outspokenness—Mr. Chaplin and Breadalbane—Editor and Staff—A Great Year—Gladiateur and the Triple Crown—The Goodwood Cup Sensation—A Momentous Step—A Cheque for a Fine—" Pay H.M. the Queen "—The Libel on Sir Joseph Hawley—Alfred Geary and " Sir Joseph Scratchhawley "—An Amazed Editor—Takes Responsibility—Fine and Imprisonment—John Corlett—Captain Outram Wallace—William Mackay—Corlett buys *The Sporting Times* for Fifty Pounds—Taverns—Strenuous Times—Mackay's Suggestion—Success—The Original Staff—Other Ventures—" And He *did* Eat ! "—The Sacking of Shifter.

ON February eleventh, 1865, a doctor, with a passion for horse-breeding, and a hatred, amounting to an obsession, for " the accursed Blacklock blood," produced the first number of his paper; a small, white, eight-page sheet entitled *The Sporting Times*, and further described as " A Chronicle of Racing, Literature, Art and the Drama," price twopence.

Dr. Shorthouse was a man of strong views and forcible language. Horace Lennard used to describe his first interview with the irascible little founder of the " Pink 'Un." The Doctor was seated at a supper table discussing a man he disliked, and whose ears, he vowed, were " as big as that tray ! "

" Come, come, Doctor, not so big as that, I hope ? " ventured someone.

" Well, they are as big as that soup-plate ! " he insisted.

" Impossible ! "

" Then they're as big as that saucer: and "—(exploding)—" damn it ! I won't make 'em an inch smaller, not for you, or for anybody else ! " and he brought down his fist on the table with a thump that nearly smashed all the crockery.

Had Dr. Shorthouse cared to practise more assiduously at his profession he might have achieved a high position in the medical world, for he had all the natural gifts of a physician. But he candidly confessed that he " disliked doctoring." He used to prescribe a pill, which, he declared, would make a man

live to the age of Methusaleh, if he only took them regularly. Someone suggested it should be called the "Methusaleh Pill," and it was sold for a time under that name, but, not being advertised, its merits did not become sufficiently recognised. At one time the Doctor had Lady Palmerston for a patient.

In his "Inaugural Address," Dr. Shorthouse set forth his views and intentions as to his paper very plainly.

"The inception of this paper," he declared, "is the result of the earnest and repeated importunity of a large number of friends and of a still larger number of strangers. In bestowing upon it so ambitious an appellation as that of *The Sporting Times*, we by no means wish to convey the notion that we are vain enough to believe it will ever occupy that position in the world of sport which its congener, *The Times*, does in the world of politics. It was a convenient name, and, as Tony Weller said, one 'easily spelt,' one which was vacant, and we therefore adopted it. Nor have we any thought of rivalling or supplanting any one of the numerous sporting papers already existing. Some of them we could not imitate or rival if we would, and others we would not if we could."

After entering into details as to his arrangements for reports from training quarters, this unique editor and proprietor proceeds:—

"Of handicaps we know nothing ourselves, and if less were possible, we should care less. But although we plead guilty to ignorance, incompetency and incapacity, a very old and valued friend, with whom we commingled youthful joys and sorrows in life's early morn—long before either of us dreamed of writing about horses or their performances—has offered to analyse the principal handicaps as they appear. This gentleman will do the the work as we do ourselves, *con amore*, and will only write when he has something to say, and on our own part, we are verily proud to say that we are likely to be favoured with the vaticinations of such a contributor, who has, already, as a prophet, achieved imperishable renown. He formerly (seven or eight years ago) wrote the sporting articles in the *Daily Telegraph* signed 'HOTSPUR.' That there may be no mistake about this matter, we may inform our readers that there have been three 'Hotspurs' writing in the *Telegraph*. 'Hotspur the First' was a marvellous prophet and predicted the winners of all the important races of the year. This gentleman is at present only known to us by name, but we hope to become better acquainted.

He has promised, however, at the entreaty of our friend 'Hotspur the Second,' to write us an occasional article. Neither of these gentlemen received any pay for their contributions. They wrote, as we do, *con amore*. . . . (Since the above was written, and in type, we have—thanks to the friendly offices of Œdipus—been favoured with a short article from the pen of the first 'Hotspur.' We give it in another column. It is headed TURF TALK, by 'THE OUTSIDER.')"

That short article by The Outsider—it was barely half a column in length—was to lay the foundation of the fortune of the *Sporting Times*, for in it, on February 11th, he mentioned the mighty Gladiateur, the triple crown winner of the year, and avowed, "he will 'come' some day, in spite of his legs, and give a very good account of himself." And to Gladiateur The Outsider stuck through thick and thin.

The Editor and Proprietor concluded his highly original address in these words:

"The expenses of the paper are not very large, most of the writers (except the reporters) doing the work *con amore*. Horse breeding and horse racing is with them, as it is with Admiral Rous and ourselves, a hobby; an unprofitable piece of enthusiasm. We daresay, if we were to spend a large sum of money in advertising this paper, so as to make it well known, that we might firmly establish it; but we have no intention, still less have we the means, to spend a large amount in advertising."

The exuberant Doctor soon appears, however, to have broken his rule as to advertising his wares, for in the June number of *Bailey's Magazine* for 1865 appears a full-page advertisement to the effect that "The Best Sporting Newspaper is the *Sporting Times*," and containing the amazing statement that:

"Since the appearance of this paper, Her Majesty's Ministers have abandoned their intention of applying to Parliament for an increase of the allowance to H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, and an influential Member of the Government has advised H.R.H. to 'raise the wind' by backing the prophecies of the *Sporting Times*. The Prince commenced auspiciously by winning £10,000 by backing Kangaroo for the Biennial Stakes at Newmarket, solely on the advice of the Editor of the *Sporting Times*!

"*Vivant Regina*, the PRINCE OF WALES, and the *Sporting Times*!"

From the first the paper seems to have attracted attention, and the Doctor harangued to his heart's delight against his *bête noire* in the equine world, the "damned Blacklock," the "cur," the "soft-hearted." Diatribes against "the damnable poison," and "the unscrupulous partisans of the Blacklock blood," appeared in well-nigh every issue, and sandwiched in the most ordinary account of a race appears such a sentence as: "Siberia is just such a wretch as we expected to find her, and being one of the accursed Blacklocks we were not surprised at her inglorious exhibition." Again: "The victory of Salpinctes has quite turned the heads of the ignorant, impudent, and imbecile twaddlers who are always drivelling about the 'stoutness of the Blacklock blood.' We take leave of the Blacklock tribe—we hope for ever!"

But the self-denying ordinance was far too severe to be obeyed, and a fortnight later the irascible Doctor fulminated in five columns against the unfortunate stallion.

Under the Shorthouse regime, the paper was devoted entirely to racing and to matters connected with the Turf. Its writers were all experts, with ideas of their own, to whom the Doctor gave fair play—so much so, in fact, that to one subscriber who complained that the six "prophets" on the staff had each given a different tip for a race in which there were seven runners, the editor and proprietor replied curtly:

"Then that merely proves that there is room for another prophet!"

With an increased circulation came an increase in outspokenness, and one finds in every issue sentences which would make the modern sub-editor's hair stand on end. For example:

"I do not know what to say respecting Mr. Chaplin and Breadalbane," remarks "The Outsider" airily, "except that I sincerely hope his horse will be nearer last than first for both his great engagements. If a gentleman with Mr. Chaplin's income thinks fit to make his horses gambling tools it will be no satisfaction to the public at large if he is successful with them."

To which his Editor appends the cheery note:

"We are sorry that so really valuable a horse should belong to such a nincompoop as Mr. Chaplin. We saw enough of his capers at Lincoln to make us heartily wish the horse had never changed hands.—Ed."

In the first year of its existence the *Sporting Times* was doubly fortunate; 1865 was a great year on the Turf, and the new sporting paper was extraordinarily successful in its racing prophecies.

As early as the beginning of February it had announced its belief in the mighty Gladiateur, and its leading tipster, "The Outsider," never wavered in his confidence, although with characteristic independence his Editor described the Frenchman as "the most unsatisfactorily bred horse in the race," and declined to express any opinion of his merits "based on breeding grounds."

The big horse won the Two Thousand Guineas at 7 to 1, and "The Outsider," who, in the very first number of the new paper had mentioned but the name of one horse for both the Two Thousand Guineas and the Derby of the year, and that one horse Gladiateur, deserved the credit given to him by his editor and his readers.

"We can therefore," wrote the Doctor after the Newmarket race, "take no little credit to ourselves, for *The Sporting Times* was the only paper in which the horse's merits were admitted at all, and the only paper in which his chance was entertained as even an outside one."

Gladiateur duly won the Derby, but his owner, Count Lagrange, provided a sensation and incurred much unpopularity by scratching him for the Goodwood Cup, in favour of Union Jack.

The sensation caused by the scratching of the Derby winner for the Cup was a nine days' wonder, and Dr. Shorthouse and his merry men were not slow to profit by it. There was a small riot when the horse walked over for the Bentinck Memorial, and the following week one of the staff poets, Amphion, was turned on, and his stanzas appeared, surrounded by heavy mourning borders.

IN MEMORIAM.

"On the 25th of July, at 1.15, Gladiateur out of the Goodwood Cup."

Not a fiver was dropp'd, not a one pound note,
As his corpse by the "special" we hurried;
And the layer discharged his farewell shot
At the moment our hero was buried.

We buried him boldly at broad noon-day,
His grave with our pencils making,
And we opened our books, but not to pray,
At the solemn "undertaking."

No useless "coughing," or "hit his leg,"
Was made an excuse for scratching,
But we "layed" like a hen, and the "golden egg"
The public was quietly hatching.

Many and short were the odds we laid,
And the public bled like a martyr,
For the seer of the "Cabman" was call'd to our aid,
To "kid" for the "certain starter."

We thought, as the clerk drew the pen thro' his name,
And smooth'd down the blotting paper,
That the mind of the public would all be aflame,
At this our remarkable caper.

Fiercely they'll talk of the "lactary Count,"
And for his "cold corpses" upbraid him,
But little he'll reck, if he sacks the amount
The public have thoughtlessly laid him.

But now when the horses were put to the hearse,
And we thought it was time for retiring,
We heard the distant and random curse
That the mob was sullenly firing.

Quickly and gladly we led him away,
From the scene of the "Bentinck" so glorious—
And we won't care a d——n, what the public'll say,
But "milk" them "till all is uproarious."

But the faithful "Outsider" stuck to the Frenchman as firmly as ever:

"I can assure your readers the horse is now as well as he ever was in his life, and if he keeps so it will only be a question of what will be 2nd, 3rd and 4th in the Leger," wrote the great horse's admirer.

Sensation continued to surround the winner of the Triple Crown—the demand for the examination of the mouth, and the suggestion that he was a four-year-old are ancient stories,—and with true journalistic *flair*, Dr. Shorthouse made the most

of his tipster's "scoop," and, incidentally, proceeded to take little rises out of the rival tipsters.

So, in the very first number of his paper, by a combination of good judgment and good fortune, Dr. Shorthouse had selected the winner of the Triple Crown as the horse of the year, and the additional circumstances that the winner was a great horse, and that the victories were attended by various sensational happenings all gave added prominence to the paper's attitude.

Primarily, the *Sporting Times* owed whatever success it attained during the first critical year of a new paper's existence to the performances of Gladiateur, the Frenchman.

It was after the great horse's victory in the Two Thousand that the Editor and proprietor decided on a momentous step, a step calculated to cause the modern proprietor's hair to stop growing—he decided to distribute the profits of the paper among his readers.

There was a simple grandeur about the scheme that the modern newspaper insurance entirely fails to attain.

"In our first number we announced that as this paper was not started with any view to profit, or as a commercial speculation, we disdained to make any profit by it, or to be rewarded in any way for our labours. Our contributors are each and all of them gentlemen of good social position, and equally decline the penny-a-lining trade. . . . We have therefore resolved to distribute the profits of the paper, such as they may be, amongst the readers of the paper itself."

And in the next issue further details were given. The profits were to be distributed as a sort of sweepstake among the readers twice a year, on the St. Leger and Derby days. For several weeks a ticket was to be printed in a corner of the paper, and when twelve tickets were collected they were to be exchanged for a numbered cheque.

"About a week before the St. Leger the names of the whole of the horses entered for the race, 248 in number, will be written on cards and put in a bag, and those numbers which draw one of the horses will be successful to that extent. The rest of the numbers will, of course, be blanks."

In view of the ultra-independence of the Editor and proprietor and of its writers it is a miracle that the paper steered comparatively clear of the law of libel, but for a time the only legal unpleasantness was in the shape of a small fine of fifty pounds for a statement which was found libellous. The Doctor drew a

cheque on Martin's Bank in Lombard Street for the amount, and on its being presented by the officials a difficulty arose. The fine was due to Her Majesty the Queen, and the old man had made it payable to Her Majesty the Queen or order. The bankers refused to cash it on the ground that it required endorsement by the Queen. There was then a consultation of the law officers of the Crown, and it was decided that the cheque should be endorsed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as the legal representative of Her Majesty, which was done, and the money was duly paid.

But the day was to come when another libel was to drive the Editor and proprietor to prison, to disgust him with his literary bantling, and to pave the way to fortune for another Editor and proprietor in the shape of one of his contributors.

In November 1869 there appeared in the *Sporting Times* a violent attack on the well-known race horse owner, Sir Joseph Hawley. The attack was written by a member of the staff, Alfred Geary, whom Corlett once described to me as the mildest mannered and most charming of men, but who, when he took up his pen, dipped it in vitriol.

Geary had been in the Army, and, after going through the Crimea, became private secretary to General Peel, in which capacity he picked up his racing knowledge. He had also some connection with the wine firm of Todheatley, and it was probably when he was with that firm that he first made the acquaintance of John Corlett, who had started his business career with Joseph Travers & Sons. Geary afterwards occupied a prominent position on the staff of the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic.*

He disliked Sir Joseph Hawley, and when he attacked the Baronet he "let the tail go with the hide." To Geary "cold print" was a contradiction in terms.

His editor was away, so never saw the proofs, and it was a mighty astonished Shorthouse who picked up his paper and read the article that was to send him to prison.

The quarrel and the personalities are forgotten, but the law of libel persists, so, as a mere matter of curiosity, and as a sample of what a printed libel may be, let me extract a few of the more striking passages from Geary's article.

The whole point of the attack was that Hawley had scratched certain of his horses from their engagements.

Wrote Geary, with a light-hearted airiness, referring to Sir Joseph Hawley as "Sir Joseph Scratchhawley":

"Numerous have been the occasions on which we have pointed a moral or adorned a tale by a reference to some upright example (unhappily rare) of probity and uprightness, of honesty, straightforwardness, and sportsmanlike conduct. Thank God, we have never been betrayed into citing the name of Sir Joseph Scratchhawley.

"Sir Joseph Scratchhawley might, if he chose, get drunk every night of the year out of a different cup won by the representatives of his stable, and yet his soul craves for something more. The noble ambition of carrying off a coveted prize, or of leading back to the scales the winner of the Blue Riband, amid the acclamations of thousands, begins already to pall upon his satiated palate, and he casts a longing eye on the gate-money milk-cans, and the corpses of the boiled, the stiff and the dead that taint the atmosphere of the ring."

And the pen takes another furious dip in the vitriol-pot.

"Matters prospered well at 'Lame-un Grange,' the breeding establishment of the wealthy baronet. Derby winners beget Derby winners. Everyone saw his wretched, discontented, scowling face, as he leaned with his chin on his stick in the Stewards' Stand and almost cursed his good horse Blackleg as he cantered home a Derby winner, because he had made a mistake and had backed the stable companion, while he had given the office to lay against the best horse of the present century. But for his own ignorance he might have won a fortune on the horse. Shall we say that in his conscience he felt such epithets bestowed on him by the sporting press as 'fine sportsman,' 'straightforward,' &c., so totally undeserved that he henceforth took the resolution to prevent, if possible, any such misplaced approbation? Since that time, whenever any of his horses have been fairly handicapped, the public have been allowed to get well on to them, and they have been scratched. Blackleg, backed for pounds, shillings and pence by the public, runs last in the Cesarewitch, and nearly wins the Cambridgeshire when they are not on. Vagrant is tried to be a moral for one of the early spring handicaps, and has the pen put through his name when everything has been got out of him that can be picked up in the market. It is reserved till the Liverpool

Cup to place the copingstone to this edifice of 'coping' proceedings. On the appearance of the weights Swindlerite is voted the pick of the handicap, and strong is their belief in the old formula that Sir Joseph Scratchhawley always goes straight and gives a run for your money, the public put down their coin and their money into the caps of those who have been '*put in to lay.*'"

Other pleasant paragraphs contained allusions to "his exceedingly mean and crafty expression," and genial remarks such as, "he has tried the square, and on the whole prefers the crooked," and "the bloody hand on his escutcheon is emblematic of the victims who have fallen from the state of the Stable Commissioner, and it will be many a long year before even the spurious popularity he once enjoyed will be restored to him."

Geary thoroughly enjoyed himself.

But an editor has responsibilities, and when the amazed Doctor saw his contributor's effusion in his pet hobby of a paper he in turn picked up his pen.

"In this journal," he wrote, "on Saturday last there appeared an article reflecting in the most unwarrantable manner upon the character and conduct of Sir Joseph Hawley. The writing and publication of that article was entirely without our knowledge, and its tone without our sympathy. We read it with surprise and disgust. We neither knew that such an article was contemplated, had been written, or was intended to be published in these columns, or we should have interdicted it. We were indisposed last week, and did not 'mount guard' on Friday evening at the office, hence the insertion of the calumny, which we are sure has caused more pain and annoyance to us than it can have done to the object of the attack."

The harassed editor also wrote to Sir Joseph Hawley, disclaiming all knowledge of Geary's eccentricity, but accepting legal responsibility for the article. As soon as he realised the pother he had caused, Geary requested to be allowed to assume full responsibility for his words, but the Doctor, eccentric as he was, had very rigid and uncompromising views as to an editor's liabilities and duties, and refused to permit his contributor to appear in the matter.

Sir Joseph would accept no apology; Lewis & Lewis were

instructed to take proceedings, and the editor was tried at the Central Criminal Court on December 15th, 1869.

The humorous and amorous Serjeant Ballantine appeared for the prosecution and Dr. Shorthouse defended himself. The handicap was too great, and the sentence—those were the days of imprisonment for libel—was a fine of £50 and imprisonment for three months.

There was nothing new in such a sentence. Edmund Yates went to prison for a libel which appeared in the *World* under somewhat similar circumstances. In fact, criminal proceedings for libel were so common fifty or sixty years ago, and the abuse became so great, that the law was altered, and now it is necessary to obtain the consent of a Judge in Chambers before a criminal action can be commenced.

In his later years the writer of the libel lived abroad, and at one time edited an English newspaper published on the River Plate, where his barbed pen frequently got him into serious trouble, and, on one occasion at least, put him in danger of sudden death. An incensed " bad man " threatened to put a bullet into him if he showed up at the theatre. The threat was the last thing to deter Geary from lounging calmly into his stall—and nothing happened.

He then went to the Cape, where he founded a paper called the *Lantern*, and there he died.

John Corlett was born in 1841, a year which he always spoke of proudly as "a vintage year," it having produced King Edward VII and many distinguished men. His father was a soldier, and his sympathies were always with soldiers.

He had, however, strong commercial instincts, and at the age of twenty-one he had risen to be the head of one of the departments in the firm of Joseph Travers & Sons. At that critical time of his life chance directed his steps towards Newmarket. He fell irrevocably in love with the Turf, and, with native shrewdness, realised that there was money to be made by an intelligent study of racing. As the firm he represented had little sympathy with sport, he had to choose between them and the Turf, and chose the latter.

When living at Carshalton he had come in contact with Dr. Shorthouse, who was then prominently before the public as the author of " Essays on Education," and " On the Physiology and Breeding of Animals, with Special Reference to the In-and-In System," and was contemplating the production of

a paper in which he could air his views. He invited Corlett to join his staff, and a letter from the future "Master's" pen, signed "Don John," appeared in the first number of the *Sporting Times*.

Two years later he left the *Sporting Times* and went to the *Sportsman* as leader-writer, but in 1874 he fell out with Mr. Ashby, one of the proprietors, and rejoined the *Sporting Times*, which in the meantime had been sold by Dr. Shorthouse to Captain Outram Wallace, from whom Corlett ultimately acquired the paper, and in his hands it became a power in the worlds of sport, the theatre and the man about town.

The only surviving member of the original staff of Corlett's *régime* is William Mackay, who, as "Jim," wrote the bulk of the front-page paragraphs before the Shifter, Pitcher and Pote days, and "Bill" Mackay was present at the negotiations in the course of which the paper was transferred to the new proprietor.

In 1874, Captain Outram Wallace, of the Black Watch, in association with two other men, founded the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, engaged Byron Webber as editor, and invited Mackay to join the staff. The office was in Wellington Street, Strand, and in the same office, Wallace was editing and publishing the *Sporting Times*, which he had acquired from Dr. Shorthouse, whose prison experience had sickened him of his journalistic hobby. Wallace was anxious to get rid of the smaller property, which seemed a more than doubtful commercial proposition, and one morning jubilantly announced to Mackay that he had found a buyer. Then he proceeded to carry his contributor off to introduce him to the new proprietor to whom, he observed, "Jim" might make himself useful.

The pair nipped into a hansom and ran the new proprietor to earth at the refreshment bar of Ludgate Hill Station, where he was leaning against the counter on the elbow of his left arm, while his right held one of his coat-tails festooned in the crook, the hand being in the new proprietor's pocket. It was a favourite and characteristic attitude. Mackay was introduced to the thick-set, somewhat bucolic-looking stranger, who stared at him through pince-nez.

This was John Corlett.

"And," once recorded "Jim," "the first words that I ever heard from the lips of that remarkable man were 'What will

you have?' I was destined to hear a good many repetitions of that same invitation from the same lips. For there and then —had I but known it—I became 'the literary staff' of a paper all Fleet Street looked upon as derelict."

The sale of the *Sporting Times* was accomplished at the Ludgate Hill Bar, the left-hand corner of which in those days—when places of refreshment were informal clubs and meeting-places instead of mere drinking resorts—was a favourite haunt of certain pressmen, and for long it was the rendezvous of the small *Sporting Times* staff. That end of the bar was presided over by a Fleet Street celebrity, Miss Sally Home, who was a species of tutor to budding barmaids. There they were taught the principles of their calling, and when finished, were sent to other of the firm's establishments. The regular noon-tide visitors to Sally's cosy corner included Christopher Pond, big and genial, and a power in Spiers & Pond's, Tom Hood, of *Fun*, and Bill Brunton, his caricaturist; Louis Lewis, brother of the great George; "Jack" Ryder, the actor, who always looked in on his way from Brixton to the theatre, and several others. Corlett introduced Mackay and Shirley Brooks to the circle, but eventually gave up the Ludgate Hill meeting place and adopted the Cheshire Cheese, as nearer to the office. And the pudding was of that stodgy and substantial kind that John loved.

For many years the tavern, *qua* informal club, played an important part in the life of Fleet Street, and much harmless fun would have been missed if the present-day fashions had been in force when No. 52 was the hub of the Pink Universe. Blobbs, Pitcher, Shifter, Gub, Ballyhooley, the Dwarf, Jim the Penman and a few others were always assembled in the front room when Corlett arrived from "Bottombarley," and after he had read his proofs and signed the cheque for salaries, the staff moved in a body to the "Rainbow." There was always to be found at the accustomed hour a company of genial spirits—from the Temple, or the West—men who never went further east of Temple Bar—waiting for them, and they talked, and talked until lunch-time.

The "Rainbow" was then an old-fashioned eating house, where the joint was wheeled round to customers as at Simpson's. Later on it was turned into a "Bodega," and the circle moved on to the "Rifle Gallery," now known as "The Cock," which must not be confounded with "The Cock" whose plump head-

waiter was immortalised by Tennyson. Tennyson's "Cock" was on the other side of the road—where the Bank of England now stands.

The "Mitre" in Chancery Lane was another haunt, the host of which was a Devonshire man named Drew, who was, of course, known as "The Abbot." He was very friendly with Bill Terriss, the actor, who was supposed to have an interest in the place, for Terriss had a commercial mind, and dabbled a good deal in public-house property during the boom of the 'nineties.

The "Mitre" was much patronised by lawyers and their clerks in those days, and Fleet Street sent its contingent, but the Abbot delighted in getting writing men round him. He would perch himself on a high stool, with a glass of the "very old, dear boy," and preside over a select company of which Pitcher, Gub, Joe Capp, the Economist, and sometimes Master would be the principal story-tellers. Barristers, with more good stories than briefs, a stockbroker cutting in on his way Westwards, a lecture agent, who took round Stanley and Oscar Wilde, a prosperous printer from Whitefriars Street, solicitors from the Law Courts with their clients—such was the favoured *clientèle* of the "Mitre."

A later haunt was the "Green Dragon"—one of the historical inns of Fleet Street, once Dickinson's Discussion Forum, and swept away when the street was widened. Then there was the Courts' Restaurant, with a big café in the basement, a meeting place for a time, where we used to amuse ourselves watching Pitcher play endless games of dominoes with a citizen who became Lord Mayor, and still dispenses justice in the City.

Nothing that he afterwards accomplished was half so sporting as Corlett's acquisition of the paper. He bought cheaply, of course, but half the fifty pounds which constituted the purchase price of the "going concern" he had to borrow, and to pay paper-maker, printers and contributors out of the profits of a "going concern" which did not show any was something of a problem.

On the strength mainly of his own article, signed "Vigilant and the Wizard," the circulation rose to the extent of a thousand or so, but there it stuck. Many were the devices employed to raise it higher. William Brunton drew some admirable cartoons of prominent followers of the Turf; Mackay himself wrote a series of brilliantly impudent "open letters to eminent persons"—some of the wittiest and best things in their

line that ever appeared in print; everyone connected with the paper worked like a galley-slave, but from a pecuniary point of view there was no result. And I have heard "Jim" declare that Fridays—the publishing day—were rendered more exciting to him than ordinary publishing days by his efforts to "cover" the worthy proprietor in fresh resorts, what time the latter endeavoured to elude pursuit by paper-makers and printers armed to the teeth with over-due accounts.

"By heavens! those were happy days!" observed Mackay regretfully one lunch-time at Gow's, when he and Lennard were reminiscing together over the merry and irresponsible past.

For months Corlett stuck gamely to his guns. Where he got the munitions from, none of his staff knew, but they did know that, after a while, when he had begun to make his journalistic, if not his financial mark, he might have brought any reasonable amount of capital into the concern if he would have consented to take in a partner. But with the *Sporting Times* he had made up his mind to be captain of his own ship, and to sink or swim with it, and any overtures as to partnership he bitterly resented.

In other matters he subsequently had several partnerships. Fred Smith—"Old Energy"—was his partner in his yacht, the "Eudora," and Mackay was his partner and registered proprietor in the first *Man of the World* (there was a second *Man of the World* ten years later; Corlett had an affection for the title, which throughout his *régime* always appeared on the front page of the "Pink 'Un" as incorporated with the roseate organ). But a partnership in the one paper of the many he owned and dabbled in to become famous he could never contemplate with patience, however bad things seemed.

At last the tide turned, and the turning of the tide was due to Mackay.

One Christmas Day his proprietor invited him to dinner, and he found Corlett in his dining-room with Alfred Geary, a far from festive pair, Corlett particularly being by no means his natural jolly self. In those days the young barrister was chock-full of the joy of living, and, as he once described himself, with a twinkle, absolutely without responsibilities or scruples of any kind, so, when John gravely asserted that "something had to be done," he urged a proposition he had adumbrated on one or two previous occasions—an article of paragraphs written in the first person singular, introducing fictitious

characters upon whom to father jokes and anecdotes. The general note was to be the note of old Père Rabelais—but Père Rabelais up-to-date.

"Have you got a title for the thing?" grunted Corlett, and Mackay replied that he had not, but that he had decided on a *nom de guerre*, and would sign the articles "Jim." Corlett at once said:

"Call the article 'The Outer World,' and go ahead!"

Mackay's most intimate chum was Reginald Shirley Brooks, elder son of Shirley Brooks, the accomplished editor of *Punch*, and to him he confided the result of the interview, on which the future "Peter Blobbs" offered his help in making a success of the new feature.

The article first appeared on the inside of the paper, but before many weeks the whole of the front page was devoted to it, and in this way the "Pink 'Un's" famous "front page" was born, and William Mackay was its creator. To that feature and to Mackay the success of the paper was largely due.

In those early days of struggle the paper was edited in a horrible, smelly little office over a smelly confectioner's in Fleet Street, a few doors from Cook's Tourist Agency, where was also edited and published the *London and Scottish Journal*, founded by "Arctic" Forbes and then continued by Tom Reid.

The "Pink 'Un" was first printed on pink paper in April 1876, a faint rose-pink, a stock of which the office economist had bought as a cheap bargain. As the colour, however, caught on, it was retained permanently.

Few people of the present day are aware that the *Sporting Times* was once published three times a week—on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays; and it was proposed to bring it out daily, but the arrangement fell through. The Wednesday edition was afterwards merged in the *Bird o' Freedom*. This, too, went the way of weaklings.

The staff in those days consisted of Corlett, Alan Jeffry (a ducal looking Scot who gave wonderful tips as "The Member for Tattersall's"), Ernest Smith, Burch, who wrote the Paris letter, Shirley Brooks and "Bill" Mackay. As the paper prospered, better offices were taken, and the paper moved over to the famous old premises No. 52, for the circulation, which had stuck mulishly at some 4,000, was going up, and Corlett, to put heart and renewed energy into his staff promised that when the

20,000 mark was reached it should be celebrated by a big dinner at Anderton's. The time came sooner than the prospective guests dared to hope, and the first " Pink 'Un " dinner came off in the bowels of the earth below Anderton's Hotel.

For some reason, none of Corlett's other journalistic ventures did any good.

Sketch, which he acquired from " Bobbos " Williams, soon died in his hands; a venture called *Pro Patria*—a title afterwards annexed by Max Pemberton—soon came to an end; the *Bird o' Freedom*, brought out first in imitation of *Le Petit Journal pour Rire*, and later in the same form as the " Pink 'Un," soon squawked and fluttered for the last time, as did also a paper called the *Prize Winner*. But to the last the old man's love for a new venture in journalism was inveterate, and in his last decade he seriously contemplated a journal devoted entirely to what he imagined to be the needs of the Domestic Servant.

In those merry, irresponsible Bohemian days, which lasted so long, and of which the visible ending was the closing of Romano's Bar, Corlett was the ideal editor for a paper of the sort. He was the embodiment of the good-humoured, fun-loving, tolerant, yet shrewd Rabelaisian ideal. He had a broad, distinctive humour of his own. He had a large frame, boundless energy, an immense interest in life, and a Gargantuan appetite. He had been known to eat a whole duckling at a sitting, and to put away, without seeming discomfort, three helpings of " Cheshire Cheese " pudding. Bowls of punch and port were provided for his staff on publishing days.

And his exercise was in proportion. In his youth and middle age a prodigious walker, he was to the last a devout lover of the open air, and quite late in life thought nothing of a ten mile stroll in order to raise an appetite for dinner. The quantity of work that he got through was prodigious. But John *could* eat.

William Allison had a story of some walnuts which is typical. One night at Newmarket Corlett returned to the Rutland after a big dinner with old Tom Jennings. In the coffee-room, on a side-table, was a supply of walnuts brought from home by another visitor—a supply to last him, as he thought, over the week-end. Corlett saw them, and, having a passion for walnuts, and imagining that they were supplied by the hotel, ordered a bottle of port and sat up until he had cracked the last shell.

Early next morning he was out on the Heath, full of energy as ever.

Old John felt aggrieved when Dwarf, Pitcher, Lennard and I resigned from the "Pink 'Un," on its sale to De Wend Fenton, and started *Town Topics*, that we did not invite him to our Inauguration Dinner. The fact that we did not have a dinner only aggravated his grievance, for he maintained that no enterprise should be set on foot without a feast. When, years ago, Bill Yardley, Pot Stephens and some others of the "Pink 'Un" staff seceded and started a paper—the *Topical Times*—they commenced with a big banquet to which Master invited himself to drink success to his new rival. And to celebrate the success of the first *Pink 'Un Annual*, which Lennard edited, we had a tremendous lunch at the Queen's Hotel in Leicester Square, then under the management of Teddy Bayly. Among the guests were Sir John Barker, Solly Joel, John Barrow, Philip Cosens, Swears, Joe Davis, Jack Hassall and Alfred Simons. We sat down at half-past one—Lennard and I got away about eight, but Pitcher and a few of the others left about five next morning.

John's relations with his staff were unconventional, and all business transactions were carried on through an intermediary who, combining the functions of manager, publisher and treasurer, was known as "The Economist." Fred Barnard was the first Economist, being succeeded by the Gibbonses, father and son. Through them, salaries were generally paid "in advance," and there was always a collection of I.O.U.'s in the petty cash box. At intervals Master would assert his authority, and insist on a "settling up"—which was quite easily effected by a general tearing-up of the I.O.U.'s, and a fresh start.

On one historic occasion, an I.O.U. of Shifter's was not torn up, and the little man protested vehemently—so vehemently that words ran high, and Shifter sacked himself, or was sacked—no one seemed to know which.

An hour later, Corlett and his staff adjourned to the Rainbow, at one end of the bar of which stood the Shifter, wrapped in outraged dignity.

"What's yours, Shif?" grunted Master.

But Shifter was implacable. Lowering his head, he butted his ex-editor and proprietor violently in the stomach like an angry ram, exclaiming between butts:

"Am I sacked or not?"(butt). "Tell me!" (butt). "Am I sacked or not?" (butt).

"Stop it—ouch!—stop it, Shifter! Ouch!" ejaculated John. "Don't be—ouch!—an—ouch!—fool!"

"Am I reinstated or not?" (butt).

"*Ouch*!—Reinstated!"

III

MASTER

John Corlett—A Fine Record—The First Number—Lord Coventry's Grand National Winners—Removal of Tattersall's—Easy-going Days—C. W. Alcock—W. G. Grace and Mr. Gladstone's Son—The Birth of Modern Football—The Oval Management—Sampson of *The Referee*—The Truculent " Pugs "—The Old School of Turf Reporter—Ned Smith—" Looking the Character "—A Reporter Wins the City and Suburban—Willes and the " Landed Interests "—Interviews Smith—" This does not look like winning the Derby! "—Great Prizes and Distinguished Sportsmen—Coomassie and the Waterloo Cup—Gabriele d'Annunzio—Cadgers—Corlett's Memory—Its Limitations—The Staff and the Screws—An Owner's Trials—Lord Carnavon—Mr. Solly Joel—George Dobell—Aimes and Mat Dawson—Women on Racecourses—Mr. Arthur Coventry—The Old Obadiah and the Young Obadiah—Goudie—Hope Springs Eternal—William the Silent—Racing Nomenclature—Lord Rossmore—" A Black Job "—Mr. James Lowther—Tod Sloan and His *Entourage*—Youthful Jockeys—Jumping to Conclusions—Corlett's Papers—John Hollingshead—A Jonah—Nellie Farren—The Country Squire.

UNDER the *nom de plume*, " Don John," Corlett had an article in the first number of the *Sporting Times* on February 11th, 1865, and, from that day, until his retirement in 1913, the old man was actively engaged in sporting journalism.

It is interesting to look back upon that first number and contrast the position of affairs in the racing world with that which now prevails.

In February 1865, the one absorbing topic was Mr. Chaplin's purchase of the two dark colts Breadalbane and Broomielaw for the then enormous sum of £11,000. Concerning this transaction " The Outsider " wrote : " I shall always consider the purchase a dear one, unless Judge Clark tells me otherwise. An untried, unknown horse (Breadalbane) at 9 to 1 for the Derby is enough to make the old ' Leviathan ' wish his health would only permit his opening a Derby book, and illuminating the first page of it with 10,000 to 1,000 versus Breadalbane."

The layer of the bet would certainly have had the best of the settling, as Breadalbane was not placed, but inasmuch as

he started at 7 to 2, the backer would have had the best of the betting.

In this old number it strikes one as curious that the long odds of 20 to 1 should have been offered at this date on the field for the Grand National, Lord Coventry's brace of winners, Emblem and Emblematic, each being quoted at this price.

In another part of the first number of the *Sporting Times* reference is made to the removal of Tattersall's from the famous " Corner " to further west. The work of removing the fountain, with the bust of the Prince Regent and the Fox, had begun. " Strange to say," observes the writer, " seeing the image of the ' First Gentleman in Europe ' lying on the ground, we were induced to go up to it and examine its features, when we discovered a drop of rain in the eye larger than a tear, and which gave one the idea that the Prince had been weeping on account of his deposition."

Those would appear to have been halcyon, easy-going days for the racing correspondent.

What would the strenuous modern editor have to say to a correspondent who prefaced his late notes with the following explanation, an explanation which precedes an article by " Don John " on the Lincoln ?

" The early departure of the trains from Lincoln prevented me from sending you my notes on the first day's racing in time for your Saturday's impression. The races began at 2, and the last train left for London about 6; and as I make a point of never writing anything until I have dined, you may guess there was little time for furnishing notes."

Thus early the old man was beginning to exhibit the imperial traits which led " Gubbins " to christen him " The Hemperor."

And the editor of to-day would probably have been stupidly unreasonable over the following message from Chester, concerning the Cup :

" The Chester Cup is over, and The Highflyer's dam colt has won. Really this is the only thing that can be said of the Meeting, but still the public demand more. It was my intention to have paid Chester a visit, and to have proceeded thither by an early train on Tuesday morning, but on putting my head out of my bedroom window I found the rain pouring in torrents, and therefore thought myself best at home."

They were free and easy days, and not only for the racing correspondent, for in " Don John's " account of a steeplechase

meeting at Grantham, over four miles of severe country which he declared would astonish Liverpool competitors, appeared an incident that would certainly astonish the National Hunt Stewards of to-day.

The meeting was a local one, and a good many laughable incidents occurred. Out of nine starters for the principal race, seven fell at the brook the first time round, horses and jockeys being all on the ground at the same time. The jockeys on rising proceeded to mount the first horses they could lay hold of, and it would have amused the professionals to hear one jockey calling out to another, "Hi, don't yer get on that oss, that's mine!"

But that first number of the *Sporting Times* by no means represented John Corlett's first essays in sporting journalism.

In the early days of his newspaper work he had been associated with C. W. Alcock, who held a very high position in the athletic world. Alcock sat in one room, and Corlett in an adjoining one, and the latter always wondered who were the rough-looking crew who used to visit his colleague every week, and hold a prolonged sitting. One member of that "rough-looking crew" was W. G. Grace, and another was the eldest son of the Grand Old Man.

It was at one of Alcock's weekly symposia that football, as we now understand it, was born. Until then, John would declare, the game, for which he had very little admiration, was played only at Dorking on Shrove Tuesday, when the ball was kicked through the streets, and the players spent the night in the lock-up. And the only game of football old John Corlett ever witnessed was when he was taken by his colleague to the Oval—of which Alcock shortly afterwards became manager—to see England v. Scotland, a match in which both Alcock and Gladstone's son took part, before a handful of spectators.

Up to the time Alcock took the reins of management of the Oval the Surrey Cricket Club had been run in a very amateurish way by a Mr. Burrup, a bookseller on the Royal Exchange. On one occasion after Jupp and Humphrey had each scored his "fifty," Burrup, as was then usual, took them out something cooling in a cup.

Henry Feist, in the *Daily Telegraph*, made graceful mention of this, and referred to the beneficent Burrup as "the welcome Ganymede." This pleased Burrup immensely, who had not the faintest idea as to the identity of Ganymede; but on looking

JOHN CORLETT
("MASTER")
From Vanity Fair

up a classical dictionary, and finding that Ganymede was a beautiful youth, who was cup bearer to Jupiter, and of by no means irreproachable character, he was furious, and commenced an action for libel, but ultimately had the good sense not to go on with it.

Alcock was especially great on his favourite, " W. G.," whose record will outlast all others. Alfred Shaw was invited by Alcock to give his opinion on Grace. " Well," he said, " I goes and puts the ball where I likes, and then he goes and puts it where he likes."

While Alcock was holding his meetings in one room at the old *Sportsman* office, John Corlett once had a curious interview with some prizefighters in the adjoining one. Harry Sampson was at that time only on the fringe of newspaper life, and was regarded rather as a " ped," and was clerk to a London bookmaker. His real genius, however, as was amply shown at a later period, and more especially in the *Referee*, lay in writing. Reports of athletic meetings and prize fights were then reported in a stereotyped manner, and most of the writers were afraid of their subject. Not so Sampson. He wrote an account of a prize fight which was suspected to have been a " barney " in a most spirited manner, and it fairly made the " pugs " sit up. Boss Tyler and three others came down to the office to have the blood of the staff, and had already, on their way down, half-wrecked *Bell's Life* office in the Strand.

They were shown up three or four flights of stairs into the editor's room, in which Corlett was sitting with the editor, a stalwart man, who in another sphere since reaped many laurels, and received the special honour of his University. By his side were two clubs, with which he was in the habit of practising, being afraid of getting fat.

Tyler and his friends were in truculent mood, and were astonished, on taking their seats, to be told peremptorily to stand up and say what they had to say in a proper manner. Boss Tyler took a furtive glance at the two clubs. The Scotch manager, who was of sturdy build, shut the door and put his back to it.

He then " let out " at those men with his tongue in a manner that astonished Corlett. It astonished the pugilists still more. They gave another look at the clubs, and glanced at the three members of the staff, all 6ft. or near it, whom they had come to destroy. It struck them that they were high up in the building

and a long way from the front door, and it occurred to them that they would not be treated in that unaccustomed manner unless there was some force to back it up. The unknown frightened them. Their idea was that there must be some sort of an ambuscade at the front door, and that if they were not quiet they would find themselves captured by the police on attempting to leave the office.

Their attitude then became as cowardly as it had been truculent. They whined and talked about the "crool" things that had been said of them, and how 'ard it was. On this the Scotch manager admonished them on their manner of life, and when Boss Tyler endeavoured to reply shut him up on the spot. "Boss," for protection, turned to Corlett, he being the only one he knew, and made a pathetic appeal.

"Ain't he harbitrerry not to let us say what we've got to say?" he whined.

Sampson's article had its effect, and small wonder that when he started a paper of his own it became an immediate success.

The old school of turf reporters was very different to the present one.

One of them won the Cesarewitch, and "Ned" Smith was within an ace of winning the Derby. For a time his stud was a singularly successful one. He was a valuable man to have on a sporting newspaper, for, though by no means a scholar, he had great facilities for acquiring information, and many owners would tell him facts that they would not mention to anyone else. Take racing men as a whole, and they would prefer one solid fact, stated ungrammatically in three lines, to three columns of the most scholarly description.

It was a favourite axiom of John Corlett's that to win the Derby a man must look the character, and he was fond of instancing the case of "Ned" Smith, who, when a reporter on *Bell's Life* had Adamas in the race, and as with this horse he had won the City and Suburban, and had only just missed the Great Metropolitan, when the two races were run on the same afternoon, his chance of winning the Derby appeared to be a great one.

Smith was, indeed, one of the "fancy" rather than a racing man, though he had in his time a good many horses. In his earlier days he was more or less a professional runner, and was an adept at pigeon flying, boxing, pigeon shooting, and other sports.

Willes, of the *Morning Post*, who was a somewhat fastidious man, and had a strong leaning towards what he called "the landed interests," was loth to believe that a man like Smith could win the Derby. On the Sunday before the race he went to see him at his lodgings in Covent Garden, and found they consisted of one room, and the tenant was in bed.

This, he said, did not look like winning the Derby. He looked round the room at the pictures, and saw Smith, clad in light raiment, running his great match with the Flying Tailor. Another was Smith holding the watch at the fight between the Boss-eyed Blazer and the Nippy Milkman.

As he looked at each of them Willes remarked, "This does not look like winning the Derby!"

When at length a dirty-looking servant brought in a tray from a neighbouring coffee shop, with a breakfast consisting of a red herring, a slice of bread and butter, and some unknown liquid in a pewter pot, Willes gave a sniff, and banging his stick on the ground, said:

"No, I am damned if this can win the Derby!" and left the room.

Adamas was only just beaten.

But Corlett was unable always to apply his theory that the great prizes in the world of sport go to the most distinguished sportsmen, for every publishing day for years the owner of a dog that had won the Waterloo Cup used to wait outside the door of No. 52, to intercept him and obtain a weekly dole.

"This day thirty years ago I was top dog," said the man, who had once been a large bookmaker, as he stopped Master on the Waterloo Cup day of 1908, when our "editor and proprietor," Pitcher, and myself were on the way to lunch, and at lunch the story was told to us.

Coomassie was the doleful one's property, but, as with many similar coups, the proceeds took to themselves wings. "A prophet is without honour in his own country," and that was old John's position with regard to Coomassie.

She at one time belonged to an Eastern Counties farmer, and it was at the house of a friend at Mildenhall that Corlett saw a greyhound lying on the hearthrug. She was often there, and on one occasion he nearly tumbled over her. When at length he was told that Coomassie would win the Waterloo Cup, and that it was the same animal he knew so well, he laughed at the advice. The idea that a greyhound that always appeared to

him to be sleeping on Philip Fitch's hearthrug would win the Waterloo Cup, which was then an event on which fifty or sixty thousand pounds could be won, seemed too absurd to entertain.

She won, however, all the same.

But all kinds of curious people go coursing, and the Waterloo Cup meeting of 1914 had a famous visitor, a quaint little figure, with pallid face and tiny peaked beard, dapper and precise in movement, who went comparatively unnoticed at the Blue Riband of the coursing world that year. It was Italy's pet child—a wee bit spoilt perhaps—Gabriele d'Annunzio; he was there with the avowed intention of buying a greyhound, which he duly carried out, and Colonel Legh's High Legh Panther became his. It was hard to imagine a more curious contrast than d'Annunzio, in a rather elaborate kit, which hardly came up to Altcar notions of fitness, and the huge figure of Lord Tweedmouth, as I saw them standing together watching a course.

The old insular notion still holds good: "If you see a foreigner heave half a brick at him." The comment of a coursing farmer, on being told that the curiously dressed little stranger was a great foreign poet who was going to buy a dog was but another expression of it:

"Dog! What's the like of him want wi' a dog? Yeou don't feed dogs with frogs!"

Another of Master's peripatetic nuisances was a character who had in former days held something of a position at the Bar, but who in his latter years divided his time between the penitentiary and the places where liquor was to be obtained at the lowest prices.

One day the old man met him in the street, and automatically felt for the half-crown which he knew would be demanded. The wreck, in his customary state of untidiness and semi-intoxication, made the expected appeal, the demanded half-crown was transferred, and the donor availed himself of the occasion to ask the recipient why he did not sober up, and attempt some sort of a fresh start.

"It's all very well for you rich men to talk about sobering up," snarled the wreck, "but I can't afford it. Do you know how much it costs to get me as I am?"

Corlett admitted that that sort of calculation was beyond his power.

"More than three quid," stated the pensioner, in solution

of the problem, " and from a florin to three shillings a day keeps me going. If I should sober up once, all that original investment would be lost, and I sh'd have to start all over again ! "

Master was the lucky possessor of an amazing memory, but that memory had curious limitations.

To the very end of his journalistic days his memory for dates and circumstances was infallible, but with regard to both human and equine features it had always been atrocious. He would often admit that what had troubled him most in life was his inability to remember faces. The man with whom he had held an animated conversation over the dinner table one day, he would in many cases pass the next day without having the slightest idea of having seen him before. Than this, he would declare, there is nothing more embarrassing, as it is calculated to create enemies.

Memory, it has been said, is of two classes,—the brain and the eye, and happy is the man who is the possessor of both. Corlett's memory was of the brain.

Considering that so much of his active life had been spent on the racecourse and with horses, it was curious that with Master, unless there was something peculiarly striking about a horse, he would never know him from another horse of the same make and colour.

And this want of perception was more than once attended with ridiculous consequences.

One Oaks day he had a filly called Guitar engaged to run in a race immediately before or after the big race. She was in the paddock, but for some reason or other John decided not to run her. Returning from the Grand Stand to the paddock, he said in his best magisterial tone to the lad in charge :

" Boy, you can take the filly home ; she will not run."

The lad made a motion to lead the filly away; then he stopped, and with an astonished face blurted :

" But, sir, this is Wheel of Fortune ! "

The lad with Guitar was on the other side of the paddock.

The old man had mistaken the great Wheel of Fortune, on which they were laying 3 to 1 for the Oaks, for his common little selling-plater, and had ordered her home.

One may be permitted to wonder what on earth would have happened if the lad in charge had obeyed his first instinct, and taken the filly away. Mat Dawson, who knew John's weakness, roared with laughter when he was told ; but the latter always

vowed that when he met Lord Falmouth afterwards, there came a look into the peer's face as much as to say:

"Was it a mistake—or was it a deep laid plan of villainy to get the filly out of the way?"

There was, however, some excuse for Master, for Wheel of Fortune, though a brilliant race-horse, was a mean-looking animal, and not unlike Guitar.

If by any stretch of imagination John Corlett could have been pictured riding in a steeplechase, he would have behaved exactly as did the farmers in the Grantham Steeplechase I have described, who, when a number of horses came to grief, grabbed at the first horses they saw, and mounted them, regardless of weight.

Master did not have the best of luck with his horses, but with a grim determination he bred and trained them, and entered them far above their proper class year after year. And that he permitted his staff to chaff his swans when they turned geese is proof that he was by no means thin-skinned.

Corlett could stand a deal of chaff about his horses, though every now and again he got his own back with interest.

At a meeting at which the plucky little Let Go the Painter had struggled into second place under a big weight, an owner proceeded to pull the old man's leg.

"Come, John, come," he said, "your stable is full of screws, and you know it."

"That is where I am better off than you," was the triumphant retort. "Yours is full of screws, and you don't know it!"

Turbulent, for example, after disappointing him times without end, at last picked up a small race at Lingfield, winning on the disqualification of the first horse for bumping and boring, and this is how the owner's staff greeted the victory on the front page of the owner's paper:

"Whereas a certain bloated autocrat named Master, being the possessor of an animated hunk of dog's meat called Turbulent, has seen fit not only to absent himself from this office on a Friday, leaving an efficient but mistaken staff to pay for its own lunch, but also counselled the said staff to plaster its miserable increment on the skewer-cheating screw for an event appropriately called the Graveside Manner Hurdle Race, run on the Friday aforesaid. Turbulent having been, as everybody but the Stewards foresaw, soundly whacked, was pulled out again

on the following day to win the Coddam Bumping, Biffing and Boring Plate. And was the staff on the second time? Ask of the duns and bums and writters and rotters who throng the entrance-hall and staircase, compelling each "Pink 'Un" consumed by thirst to drop from the front window, swarm down the tailor's shop front, and run like a hare. A bas, M. le Maitre! Conspuez, chestnut son of Matchmaker and Torpedo-Catcher! Rats!

(Signed) The Staff."

But in spite of everything, John was secretly proud of Turbulent, and one muddy day, when he saw the old horse enter the paddock with his tail tied up:

"Take out those curl papers," he grunted indignantly to his trainer, Cowap; "it looks as though he were going into the Ring to be sold for a 'tenner.'"

The curl papers were taken out, and in sheer gratitude Turbulent won his race, and on that success John elaborated a theory that a horse with a long tail suddenly screwed up into a wisp feels as uncomfortable and as irritable as a man with a frayed collar.

When, on a former occasion, Bird of Eve was left at the post at Epsom the staff formally congratulated the starter, Lord Marcus Beresford.

"Lord Marcus has certainly signalised his first Epsom, as far as we are concerned. Bird of Eve was left at the post, and was last throughout. As we absolutely declined to have our salaries down on the brute at Master's suggestion, here is luck to Marky."

No wonder that in a sudden access of melancholy, the old man started his "Note Book" with the profound reflection:

"The greatest difficulty an owner of horses has to contend with is in dealing with his friends."

True words, as more owners than John Corlett have found.

If an owner is at all a decent fellow he will naturally desire, when he has what he believes a good thing, that his friends should win as well as himself. And, as a rule, when an owner is very sanguine and takes his wife and friends and all his maiden aunts to see the horse win, the animal refuses to fulfil his part of the contract. And then the brute wins some day when neither wife, nor friends, nor maiden aunts have been told anything, whereupon: "Ah, he kept that for himself!" they say

satirically, refusing to believe that the owner had not a penny on.

The public are somewhat given to mapping out a plan of operations for an owner, and if he fails to follow out their plan he is accused of misleading them.

In these days of Tutankhamen it is curious to reflect that in 1904 the late Lord Carnarvon stood in much the same position as did Lord Stamford, who once said, with some bitterness:

"I have lost a quarter of a million of money on the Turf, and yet I am called a sharp!"

Lord Carnarvon's losses had not been so heavy as Lord Stamford's, but that he had lost there could be little doubt, and he too, in the eyes of many, was a "sharp." And in certain circles he was pilloried as a "sharp."

The public backed Laveuse for the Cambridgeshire, not knowing that the stable contained a better in Vril, who so nearly won the race. Lord Carnarvon ran the horse that he considered to have the best chance, but he never told the public to back Laveuse, neither was he called upon to tell them to back Vril. But there was much murmuring.

Not all owners are secretive when they think they have a good thing.

"I don't want to bother you, Mr. Joel," said a young khaki lad, as Pommern was being saddled for his historic Derby, "but I'd like to take a little back to France with me. D'you think I might have a dash on yours!"

"Chance a monkey," said Solly.

"A monkey!" repeated the bright youth, a little dismayed at the magnitude of the transaction; "that's rather a lot, isn't it? Suppose it doesn't come off?"

"Then the front's a damn good place to take the knock from," retorted the owner of the eventual Derby winner consolingly.

But owners' friends are exacting folk.

It was a great friend of Corlett's, old George Dobell, who, on being reproached by an excitable little man, who had failed to back one of Dobell's horses after having been told to do so, replied:

"But I told you to back it."

"Yes, I know you did," said the friend, "but you weren't confident enough. How could I back it when you weren't confident?"

LORD CARNARVON
Caricature by Rowland

"I told you it could fall down and win," expostulated the owner.

"Yes, I know you did," said the other with an aggrieved air, "but you might have put it stronger!"

With that well-known character Victor Aimes, part-trainer and part tout, it was different. People were always imploring him on bended knees to back something or other. Aimes was a man given to highly-coloured language, delivered in the most voluble and emphatic manner, and, as the historic cabman observed, with him it was a case of "Lumme, sir, it's a *gift*!"

On one occasion his son told him he was an old fool.

"Well!" exclaimed Victor, appealing to the bystanders, "that's a —— fine thing for a —— son to say to a —— father!"

Aimes was, moreover, very superstitious.

"Did you back it?" he was asked when a certain horse had won.

"Back it?" he repeated. "Back it? How could I back it? May I never eat another bit o' meat in this bloomin' country if Mat Dawson didn't come to me an' tell me it 'ud win; and when I told him I thought of backin' something else, didn't he go down on his bended knees to me and say, 'Vic, I *implore* you to back it, and if you don't, I'll never tell you anything again as long as I live!'"

"And didn't you back it?" he was asked, the horse having won.

"Back it!" he cried again. "How could I back it? Just as I was going to do it I met that cock-eyed Mrs ——, and that was enough for me! Would you have backed it, I should like to know, if on your way to do it you'd met a woman with a cock-eye?"

But apart from the cock-eye variety, Corlett himself did not altogether approve of the presence of women at races, and the betting woman in particular was his abomination.

"They neither win with dignity nor lose with equanimity," was his sweeping dictum. And as a sample of the utterly fatuous he was wont to adduce the remark addressed to him by a certain beautiful lady on a famous occasion when Archer, Watts, G. Barrett and Wood were ordered to appear before the Stewards for disobedience at the post. On seeing the jockeys appear in the Stewards' stand: "How very nice of the Duke of Beaufort to ask those jockeys to lunch after winning the Cup!" she cried admiringly.

And he would declare that it was due to the presence of a woman on a race-course that once,—only once,—did he see the late General Owen Williams lose his self-possession.

It was at Ascot, and the paddock was uncomfortably crowded, chiefly, it must be ungallantly admitted, by the fair sex.

The General was bent on seeing a particular two-year old saddled, but, dodge as he might, he could not get out of the way of a flaming red sunshade carried by a lovely little lady. In fact, so brilliant was the sunshade, that the instant the General's two-year old caught sight of it, it reared.

The lovely little lady sprang back in alarm, jabbing the General in the cheek with the ferrule of her parasol.

"It's perfectly *scandalous* that horses should be allowed in *here*!" she exclaimed indignantly.

But it was a bookmaker, the late Jack Harper, who carried the sex-war into Tattersall's enclosure with a vengeance, for, though—or perhaps, because—a married man, he was a confirmed woman-hater.

Betting in the ring at Hurst Park, he was shouting his earnest desire to lay seven to four on the field.

"Two pounds to one for a lady?" pleaded a sporting Romeo, holding forth the dear, dear, antebellum piece of gold.

"No!" roared Harper, with wholly unnecessary emphasis. "Seven to four men only! *Evens* the —— women!"

On at least one occasion Mr. Arthur Coventry was inclined to wish that women did not go racing, as it was borne upon him that even the fairest of the sex are liable to jump to false conclusions in technical matters.

At a certain meeting at which he was starter, a beautiful lady went down to see the start, and, relating the experience to a friend, on being asked what race it was, she said it was a handicap.

"Oh, no," said the friend, "the race you saw was not a handicap—it was what is called a weight-for-age."

"I'm sure it was a handicap," she protested pettishly. "Mr. Coventry started them one by one, and that's a handicap, isn't it?"

"Started 'em one by one!" groaned Mr. Coventry when the story was told him. "Thank heaven she's not a reporter! I wonder how she'd describe one of my happiest efforts?"

Two faithful "Pink 'Uns" were old George Dobell and

Photograph : Central News

MR. ARTHUR COVENTRY STARTING THE GRAND NATIONAL

his son "Reggie," and, like all Corlett's intimate friends, the Dobells were great personalities.

It was the Old Obadiah, as he was dubbed, who made a characteristic suggestion to a notorious ladies' man, who had bought a horse, and proposed to start racing. The new owner consulted old Dobell as to what colours he should register.

"I want something that will catch the eye," he explained.

"Flesh colour?" suggested the Old Obadiah grimly.

And it was of a newcomer to the Turf of a somewhat similar description Corlett asked Dobell, who knew him:

"Do you think his coming on the Turf will do any good?"

"Well, to certain people," replied Dobell, "it will do a lot of good."

"What people?"

"His wine merchants. For if he keeps his few horses as he keeps himself, his brandy bill will be the heaviest in England!"

At the time of the Goudie frauds, George Dobell was a power on the board of the Bank of Liverpool, a prominent official of which was notorious for his piety, and disapproval of wine, women and horses. It was an amiable weakness of the official to run little societies on teetotal and Y.M.C.A. lines for the moral and social benefit of the clerks, and unfortunately Goudie, the fly Scotch "mug" from the Orkneys, was a prominent member of these institutions. When the news swept over Liverpool that the Bank had been robbed for a colossal amount —at first estimated in the various clubs and on 'Change at all sorts of impossible figures—a meeting of the bank authorities was promptly summoned, and old Dobell duly attended.

His greeting to the pious official was in his best manner.

"Well, Mr. Blank," he grunted, "another of your —— Christians gone wrong?"

But for once in a way the pious official got his own back.

"No, Mr. Dobell," he replied meekly; "in this case, I—I—I believe he is a racing man."

And no one subsequently told the story better than Dobell himself.

Old John took a severely practical view of race trophies. When the Young Obadiah was expected to win the Gold Cup, Master, after inspecting it, observed rather scornfully that its capacity for holding a quantity was not great.

"A man would be puzzled to get a tregnum of champagne into that!" he sniffed.

But the horse did not win, so John did not take his draught out of a gold cup, though, as he more than once observed, he had eaten his food off a gold plate—and preferred china.

"A gold plate is no good unless you are allowed to take it away with you," was his verdict.

But in a rare poetic vein he once wrote:

"What wine tastes like drunk out of a golden goblet we have yet to learn, but, hope springing eternal in the human breast, we will persevere, and when it shall be that the Nectar of the Gods is handed to us, we hope it will be from a vessel that we ourselves have won, and on which and on its contents no heavy duty has been placed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer."

And the fact that hope sprang eternal in the old man's breast was by no means due to the watering of the tender plant on the part of the staff. It was after one of the numerous failures of William the Conqueror—afterwards re-named William the Silent, for various excellent reasons known to members of the Pelican Club—that Shifter accompanied his chief to a circus, the chief attraction of which, from Shif's point of view, was that it was an entertainment which could be seen better from the bar than elsewhere.

And loudly did proprietor and staff applaud when one Gilbert, the equestrian performer of the day, appeared in his jockey act, dressed in the Corlett pink.

"This compliment to my colours," soliloquised John, with pleasure, "is indeed pretty. I like this."

And then a change came over the old man's face, and he was heard to mutter, "Another put-up job!" when, as the circus horse ambled slowly round the ring, the unmistakable voice of the Shifter was heard to say, in loud, aggressive tones:

"Never saw Corlett's colours being carried so fast before!"

The re-christening of the ambitiously-named "William the Conqueror" originated with the old man's staff,—he found it impossible to refuse, for apt nomenclature was one of his foibles.

Periodically discussion arises as to the wittiness and aptness —or otherwise—of the naming of horses, and with old John Corlett it was a favourite topic. He always awarded the palm for apt nomenclature to the late General Peel, who had a colt by Camel out of Changeable, which he named Cameleon. This, John would declare, took first prize, and Lord Wilton was perhaps entitled to second prize for a colt by See Saw out of Honeymoon, which he named Cradle, and then, as a very good

third, came Lord Rosebery's Roysterer, by Cremorne out of Caller Ou,—a name which was the outcome of the brain of Gubbins. The Duke of St. Albans also had a pretty wit, when he named a colt by Parmeson out of Noblesse, High and Mitey.

But the prize for apt nomenclature might with some reason be claimed by little Shifter.

About a year before he went to solve the great Why and Wherefore he was so desperately ill that a Thursday came round and found him with no material for making "copy." As a last resource, he grabbed a *Racing Calendar.*

"Let's find some names for the Queen's yearlings," he said, chucking the official sheet across the table. "What's the first?"

"Filly by Hampton out of Gallantry."

"A filly?"

"Yes."

"That's dead easy: 'A-filly-ation.'"

But Queen Victoria refused to rise to the occasion, even though Shifter personally sent her a marked copy of the "Pink 'Un" to Balmoral,—which was a pity, for any attempt at apt nomenclature deserves encouragement.

Wherefore, let it never be forgotten that the late Lord Rossmore soared to empyrean heights when he re-named a horse of which much had been expected, but little or nothing realised. "Wild Hyacinth" was the brute's first poetic name, but after the tenth or twelfth disappointment it figured ingloriously in the *Racing Calendar* as "Tame Lowercinth," and "Derry" wrote to us exulting in the feat.

As an instance of how an owner may suffer from the chances of a race, it looked indeed, as Master observed, a "black job" when, after William the Silent had run badly in a paltry nursery at Alexandra Park one Saturday, he was within a head of winning a thousand pound nursery at Derby three days later.

As a strict matter of fact, the horse actually won, and as the Stewards shared in the general astonishment when his number was placed second, they ordered the judge's box to be moved to the stand side of the course.

Mr. James Lowther was placed third, and there was a dry smile on his lips when he asked:

"Is this the same William the Silent, Mr. Corlett, that ran at Alexandra Park on Saturday?"

Writing to a friend after the race:

"Notwithstanding my deservedly high reputation, and the

general good character that I enjoy for the beautiful and the true," said the old man, "I am satisfied that most people thought that a 'black job' had been attempted. In reality, I lost £150 on the horse at Alexandra Park, when he was supposed not to have tried; and only had £80 on him at Derby."

Corlett had conceived a great admiration for Mr. James Lowther on the first day of their acquaintance, which was made at a dinner given by some South African merchants. Mr. Lowther was present in his capacity of Under Secretary for the Colonies, and, in having to respond for the toast of Her Majesty's Ministers, struck Corlett dumb with reverential wonder by the way he got his tongue round the name of a rebellious native chief, Llangallibalillee,—or something like it. That name he had to pronounce very frequently, not an easy thing to do after dinner, and, as Corlett observed, it would have made an excellent Bow Street test.

The two men had a very real admiration for one another, in spite of the fact that there was not an atom of sentiment in Mr. Lowther's composition.

Corlett once spoke to him of a distinguished soldier, who, many people considered, had been badly treated, and had gained a seat in the House of Commons. Corlett rejoiced in his success, but Lowther's reply was cold commonsense:

"The man with a grievance is the greatest bore that can possibly be inflicted on the Commons. He owes his position, nine times out of ten, to some weak act of his own, and he tries to inflict on us the woes he has brought on himself."

On another occasion Corlett tried unsuccessfully to intercede for a man who had been warned off the Turf, and had expiated his offence by a term of imprisonment. He went abroad, where he trained some high-class horses, and it seemed to Master that he had done all he could to retrieve his position and to rank once more with honest men.

"I fail to see," was Lowther's uncompromising reply, "why, having got rid of a rogue, we should take any steps towards bringing him back again."

And when the Jameson Raid went ingloriously wrong, someone said to Lowther that, after all, the Raiders were only going to Johannesburg to protect the women and children.

"It seems to me," he said, "that it is as if a man, having broken into a shop of a Bond Street jeweller, was caught by the

police, and, when asked what brought him there, said he thought somebody was assaulting the cook."

When he succeeded Hicks Beach in the Irish Secretaryship, one who knew both men well was asked if there was much difference between them.

"This much," was the comprehensive reply, "everyone calls James Lowther 'Jim.' No one on God's earth would call Michael Hicks Beach 'Mike.'"

A man of strong likes and dislikes, Mr. James Lowther never hesitated to express either, and he left no doubt as to his opinion of Tod Sloan when he saw the swollen-headed but great little horseman drive to the races at Newmarket with a queen of the Opéra Bouffe on one side of him and another gay lady on the other.

Between the two the little man could hardly be seen, but Mr. Lowther saw him.

And a curious transatlantic crowd it was that found its way to Newmarket's classic heath during the Sloan and Reiff eras, and "Jim" Lowther was not alone in his disapproval.

In particular was there one particularly poisonous little American Hebrew, who has since passed away, who became the centre of many stories,—some printable, most not. One of the best of the printable ones was of a bout of fisticuffs in which he engaged in the paddock with another American Jew over mutual monetary recriminations. The poisonous one was the under-dog, and was getting much the worst of it, when he gasped out:

"Quit, Loo, quit! Look at all the gahdam Christians laffin' at us!"

And, to the increased laughter of the "gahdam Christians" Loo "quit."

But not all jockeys are extravagant on the Sloan model, and some of the more youthful—not all—look like angel-faced cherubs. Which reminds me:

Hurrying to catch the last train from Kempton with Pitch and Lennard, we struck a carriage which was empty but for a gentleman with long hair and spectacles, and a small boy. As Pitcher pulled at the door, the boy cried: "This is reserved!" and endeavoured to prevent our entrance.

"Reserved be jiggered!" snapped Pitcher. "You can't reserve carriages like that. Jump in, Booth!"

When we were seated, the stranger remonstrated mildly,

adding that they wanted to reserve the carriage for the boy's father.

"The father should be here then to take care of the kid!" snorted the Pitcher, thoroughly annoyed. "What does he want to bring children racing for, anyway?"

At that moment the father appeared, and we were half way to London before Pitch discovered why Lennard and I had roared with laughter.

The child who ought not to have been brought racing was Frank Wootton—not entirely unkown to the racegoers of to-day—who had ridden the principal winner of the afternoon. At that time Pitcher did not go racing so often as he used to, and young Wootton, in knickerbockers, with his broad Eton collar beneath his chubby face, looked anything but the rising jockey of the day.

But it is an old truism that it is bad to take the total stranger for granted,—for he may know more than his appearance suggests.

In the smoke-room of a Liverpool hotel after a certain Grand National an obese Londoner was belittling the great jumping race, the horses in it, the country in which it is run, and all connected with it, and wound up by declaring roundly that there was only one race in the world that he personally cared a damn about seeing. So long did this bore of a total stranger hammer away at his theme that he stung one weary listener to retort:

"You appear to have an inordinate affection for Epsom Downs, sir," snapped the inoffensive little man. "Pray, were you born, bred, or even begotten there?"

"Neither, sir," replied the bore pompously, "but, thank God, I am able to say what no other man in this room can say,—that my father owned a Derby winner."

"Oh, is *that* it?" sneered the little man. "You need not get puffed up, I can assure you! There is my friend yonder—reading the *Liverpool Echo*—his father owned a Derby winner. There is my friend at the window—sitting at the writing-table—his father owned a Derby winner. There is my friend over there—smoking a cigar by the fire-place—*his* father owned a Derby winner. If you want any more—"

"I don't want to call you a liar," snarled the stranger, "but if you'll bet a fiver that—"

"Oh, done; done with you, with pleasure, sir!" cried the little man, and proceeded to introduce to his challenger his

friends, Frank, Alec and Hugh Popham, the three sons of the fine old sportsman who took the Derby with Wild Dayrell in 1855.

Many were the papers John Corlett started, and thought of starting, but the "Pink Un" remained alone in its success.

But deep down in John's mind was a desire to start a Church paper, which was to knock the insides out of the existing religious and sectarian organs, and a confirmed Fleet Streeter, getting an inkling of this secret ambition, approached him with a proposition.

"I've been thinking," he observed, "that there's a big opening for a new religious paper. If I could only find someone to finance it, blessed if I wouldn't start one."

"But," grunted John bluntly, balancing his eyeglasses between finger and thumb, "what do *you* know about religion?"

"Nothing," replied the candidate for the editorship with refreshing frankness, "but I'll damn soon learn!"

And once more the starting of the great religious weekly was postponed.

Another ambition that failed to materialise was the starting of a paper for the special benefit of the domestic servant, designed to cater solely for the needs of that exacting section of the community. But as the audience to which it was to be designed to appeal has dwindled to the merest handful in these proletariat days, it is perhaps just as well that the scheme never matured.

For a time, both the *Bird of Freedom*—the "Blue'Un" as it was called in the "Pink 'Un," and *The Man of the World*—a title for which John had a great affection—seemed on the verge of "making good," and there was admirable work in both of them.

Old John Hollingshead, "honest John" of the Gaiety, predicted the death of the former when he was persuaded to contribute his reminiscences to its pages. He had a curious belief, quite unfounded, that he never brought any luck to any paper he wrote for, and before commencing his reminiscences for the "Blue 'Un" he assured the editor most emphatically that he was a Jonah, and that his work was far more likely to kill the paper than to increase its circulation.

After the death of Lionel Lawson—great-uncle of the present Lord Burnham—ill-fortune began to dog Practical John, and

à propos of this period of declining funds, "Bill" Mackay had an amusing incident to tell.

Going into Blanchard's, in Beak Street, one afternoon, he found Nellie Farren lunching alone. He took a seat at her table. A few days previously they had met in the Strand, and she had told him that the Gaiety owed her four weeks' salary —a considerable sum—and that she was on her way to deliver an ultimatum to John. It was to be a case of "No pay, no play."

Referring to this meeting, "Bill" asked her how she had got on.

"My dear boy," she replied, with a pathetic smile, "John is quite hopeless. Not only did he get me to postpone my demand for arrears, but he persuaded me to buy the old piano in the green-room!"

The last time I saw John Hollingshead before his death, he was standing in the Strand watching the demolition of the Old Gaiety. He pointed to the new theatre, and said, in his curious high-pitched voice:

"It's cost them a few more thousands to put *that* up than it did me to put up *that*." And he indicated the ruins of the Old Gaiety.

Eheu fugaces!

"Oh! our thoughts go back to the times we knew,
To a day that is past and gone,
When midst waves of laughter a jovial crew
With the Gaiety ship sailed on!"

As his one successful paper increased in popularity and esteem and became gradually the recognised organ of the race-course, the club, the mess, the smoke-room, and, perhaps above all, of the man about town, so paradoxically did John Corlett develop into the country squire.

Ever a lover of the country and of the open air, at Charlton Court, his beautiful Elizabethan place near Headcorn, in Kent, he bred his horses, fattened his pigs, and grew his peaches, descending on Fleet Street at intervals of a week or more. And, unlike most newspaper proprietors of to-day—or so I am given to understand—the members of his staff were amongst his most frequent guests.

IV

TOWN AND COUNTRY

" Bottombarley "—The Shifter's Protest—Headcorn Church—The Baroness Burdett-Coutts—The Duke of Teck—Pensioners—Extracting " Copy "—Sir Henry Drummond-Wolff—The " Souls "—Downey and Queen Victoria—The Cavaliere Ginistrelli—The Romance of Signorinetta—A Farmer's Trials—The Anxious Tailor—Willie Goldberg—Shifter and his Admirers—A Law Courts Scene—Shifter as Dramatic Critic—An Interrupted Confidence—The Life of the Journalist—Shifter and Sir Thomas Brassey—An Historic Meeting—The Eager Tout—Persistent Tipsters—Charlie Hibbert—Bessie Bellwood—A Question of Pedigree—The Obsequious Editor—The Man in Possession—Cheering the Depressed—The Bellwood Dignity—Belle Bilton—Nellie Farren—Prince Christian Arrives.

IN a rare mood of poetry and self-revelation, one sweltering Autumn, the old man wrote:

" From beneath the cool shade of a sycamore, and fanned by a gentle breeze, we can read with complacency letters from London speaking in plaintive accents of the sun's rays registering 150, and the effect they are having on the manners and customs of the people living in the city. We had determined this week on resuming harness, but for a little while longer we will avoid what one writer has called ' the bake-house ! ' No London hotels with heated coffee-rooms, redolent of eggs and bacon, no sweltering London street for us, if we can help it.

" Picture on the other hand an Elizabethan house in Kent, its large rooms darkly panelled, and its black oak richly carved, mullioned and latticed windows, and the breezy call of incense-breathing morn. No eggs and bacon for breakfast, no coffee and no tea; simply a cold grouse, a peach weighing ten ounces, with all its bloom on it and plucked freshly from the tree, a dish of cold stewed plums, and one or two glasses of light claret; a glance at the *Special* which has arrived by the morning's post, and then a saunter on to a terrace overlooking one of the fairest prospects in England.

" It is then that you feel as though you had backed a winner.

" Under a huge oak in the meadow are two brood mares lazily switching their tails, and in an adjacent field two or three

yearlings are capering. On the sky line thirty miles away is Fairlight Glen, but lost to-day in the haze. Before us we take in at one glance nearly the whole of the glorious Weald of Kent, and across it comes in all its purity in uninterrupted flow, the balmy breeze that cools the heat of the torrid sun. It brings with it wafts of heliotrope, and occasionally mignonette, and now and then we catch the pleasant refreshing odour that the sun burns from a not far distant plantation of pine trees. In the background, rising on the hills, are many hop gardens, overladen with rich and beautiful flowering vine, hanging in garlands and lending artistic beauty to the scene. In the orchards the plum trees are broken down by weight of fruit, and looking at all this, we feel that we are indeed in the midst of the garden of England. It would pass well for the Garden of Eden.

"Racing offers just now no inducement to exchange these pleasant surroundings for the less poetic atmosphere of the running track."

On reading which Shifter immediately wrote in his "Office Boy's Diary"—a series which would have made the name and fortune of many a lesser humourist:

"Mr Marster writes to kno ow the paiper iz. i av offered two bites of A happle to a ded tom cat that it doant kum howt, but the horfis boy of the *Kristchun Gloab* won't bet."

Those were pleasant week-ends at "Bottombarley," as Shirley Brooks christened John's Headcorn place, and the old man entertained with the hospitality of the true country squire, a character which he fitted to the life.

Every Sunday morning, carrying his huge prayer-book, he marched to the village church, where he read the lesson with a stateliness of diction many a parson might envy, and at the Sunday luncheon afterwards he kept open house.

The lectern and some other ornaments in Headcorn Church had been presented to it by the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, in remembrance of a honeymoon visit, for Headcorn was the wayside station at which she alighted on her honeymoon, on the way to High Halden.

At a luncheon party at "Holly Lodge," in 1907, the old lady and John Corlett exchanged reminiscences of Bottombarley, and I remember Master telling of the Baroness's tender enquiries as to one of her pensioners in the village, an old lady who for fifty years had never left her bed, and, from the house

which she had taken before the South Eastern was built, heard the trains she had never seen dash by.

At that luncheon party, as the guests began to arrive, Corlett found himself in conversation with a gentleman, whom, for some reason, he assumed to belong to the French Embassy, and broke the conversational ice by remarking cheerfully:

"We gave you Frenchmen the Grand Prix in not running our horse."

This, however, did not seem to interest the distinguished stranger; in fact, he did not appear to comprehend the remark.

Presently, finding himself next to a lady he knew:

"Who is that Frenchman sitting next to the Baroness?" asked old John.

"A Frenchman!" she replied. "That is the Duke of Teck!"

Later in the afternoon John was able to explain the meaning of a picture which had puzzled the Duke. It was a cartoon, hanging in the hall, which depicted Queen Victoria riding pillion behind Prince Albert, along a road on which the sign-post pointed to Dunmow. It was the year after their marriage, and they were supposed to be on their way to receive the Dunmow Flitch, attended by Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell, the Duke of Wellington and Lord Melbourne, and, according to Master, the Duke seemed to think the Flitch a poor reward.

If the Baroness had her pensioners at Headcorn so had John Corlett, and the poor of "Bottombarley" had reason to bless the day when the burly old gentleman settled at Charlton Court and became the country squire.

And it is to be hoped that not all John's pensioners were as exacting as a certain Fleet Street hanger-on, who, every publishing day, called for his half-crown, a dole to which he had no conceivable claim, except on the old man's pure kindness of heart.

One year, Corlett took a long sea holiday on the coast of Morocco, and his pensioner was not the least eager of those expecting his return.

On the first appearance in Fleet Street after the holiday the beneficiary was waiting for the luncheon exit from "No. 52," and as he received the usual grunt of recognition, and the usual half-crown dropped into the outstretched palm, he looked at the coin with disgust.

Turning it over:

"What about the arrears, Mr. Corlett?" he demanded indignantly.

And so flabbergasted was old John that he hurriedly poured a handful of mixed copper and small silver into the pest's grimy hand before clambering into the waiting taxi.

"Well, I'm damned!" he puffed, as we sped on to Romano's. "Did you hear that, Pitcher? Arrears! *Arrears*, indeed! Oh they're hot—the present day cadgers! They're hot!"

In the midst of the country life he never forgot his paper, and his scent for "copy" was as keen as ever.

For example, on one particular Sunday, he noticed amongst the congregation in the village church old Sir Henry Drummond-Wolff, and as he left, he found the veteran waiting for him in the porch.

"I've a good story for you, Corlett," said the old gentleman.

"Let's have it," replied John, "they are scarce just now," and then and there the story was told.

Sir Henry had just returned from a visit to a house in Ireland, the hostess of which was a confirmed match-maker. Others of the house party were a most desirable young gentleman of good property, and a charming young lady, on whom the hostess had matrimonial eyes. It was a hot July day, and the journey had been long and dusty. On retiring for the night the charming young lady noticed on her way to her room an open bathroom, and thought how refreshing a bath would be. Waiting till all was still she emerged from her room, and was carefully shutting the bathroom door when a notice caught her attention, to the effect that the lock was out of order, and that the door was not to be shut, as it could only be opened from the outside.

She pondered the situation, and then, reflecting that everybody had retired for the night, she left the door ajar and entered the bath.

Meanwhile the desirable young gentleman of good property had experienced precisely the same feelings, and had come to precisely the same determination. He proceeded, however, in a manner quite different to that of the lady, and entering the bathroom hastily, banged the door behind him.

To his consternation there came a little scream from the occupant of the bath, who had instantly appreciated the difficulty with the door.

He made a bolt for it, and tugged frantically, but without avail.

"What can I do? What can I do? I can't open the door!" he spluttered.

The young woman was quick-witted, and made up her mind in a flash.

"If you are a gentleman," she said,—"I know you are,—you will turn your back to me while I lather myself."

"Lather herself! Lather herself!" he reflected confusedly, and wondered how on earth that was to help them.

He, however, did as he was requested, and presently heard a vigorous commotion with soap and water. Then:

"Now we must do the best we can," she said, "and you must ring for someone."

He turned round, and saw that by the use of the soap she had made the water perfectly opaque, and her *décollétage* was infinitely less than it had been at dinner. The ridicule of the affair, however, put an end to the matrimonial projects of the hostess.

And as he jotted down a note or two on the back of an envelope Corlett realised that another Sunday in the country had not been wholly wasted from the point of view of "copy."

But Drummond-Wolff, besides an appreciation of a good story, had a pretty wit of his own.

It was at the time of the Jubilee,—and also of that curious *coterie* of "Souls," the members of which had a custom of speaking of one another and their friends as "Souls," as: "She is a lovely soul," or "how many souls are coming to dinner?" or "he is an interesting soul," and so forth.

During the preparations for the Jubilee, a prominent member of the Government—and of the "Souls"—was talking with "Drummy" on the all-absorbing topic of the great fancy-dress ball at Devonshire House, a ball which has become historic.

"What are you going as?" enquired the cheery diplomat.

"Oh, I've taken an idea from a picture I once saw in Amsterdam—a Burgomaster in Dutch costume."

"Ah, I see," remarked "Drummy"; "*sole à la Hollandaise.*"

Corlett had the gift of extracting "copy" in the shape of good stories from the most unlikely folk, and he once even drew the secretive and diplomatic Downey, the Court photographer, into a reminiscence of his early association with the late Queen.

Queen Victoria's ordinary expression was sedate, bordering

on severity, which did not look well in a photograph, and, on his first interview with his royal sitter, the photographer, having adjusted his camera, surveyed the royal face, and found it was not composed to his liking. So, in strong Northumbrian accents, he asked:

"Would it be por-sible for your Meegesty to put on a more pleezing expression of countenance?"

The Queen laughed, and from that day forth Downey became a Royal favourite.

Soon after Signorinetta's sensational Derby, Corlett met the Cavaliere Ginistrelli staying in the same house for the Newbury Meeting, and the simple old gentleman was full of naïve stories of his wonderful mare and himself, all of which Master converted, after his inimitable fashion, into excellent "copy."

Many stories have been told of the romance of Signorinetta, but here is the true story from the Cavaliere's own lips. Signorina, her dam, was one of the most brilliant two-year-olds ever seen.

"Come into this bank," said Mr. Graham, of Yardley, to the Cavaliere Ginistrelli, "and count out for yourself 20,000 sovereigns, and you shall have them for her."

The bank was Hammond's, at Newmarket. But the Cavaliere "loved his children" and refused to sell.

The mare fared badly, was ill when she was beaten by Memoir for the Oaks, but her owner had his revenge when her daughter beat another horse of the Duke of Portland's for the Derby.

"Charley Rayner," said Mat Dawson once, "breeds good horses year after year, and all they have to run in is a kind of backyard, where people throw their broken bottles." Signorinetta had nothing but a small orchard to run about in, and the little filly that ran round an apple tree beat the Duke of Portland, with his great ranging pastures and ideal stud farms.

In a letter to Corlett which lies before me and in which he elaborated his theories of breeding in characteristic manner, the Cavaliere thus told the story of Signorina's love affair.

"One day Chalereux was out for his usual morning's walk, and passing as was his wont through the brickfield adjoining my property. All of a sudden he started to neigh as never horse neighed before. The mare was out in the paddock, and on hearing the voice of her lover immediately answered him, and this incident took place every time they met. Considering all this as more than sufficient data I persevered, confident from

the very first that I was not far wrong, and that the result of such a union would be an exceptional animal for stamina. Signorina was phenomenal for her speed, Chalereux was the same for stamina and sturdiness, and I was more than convinced that by such a discovery of nature's ways I should be more than rewarded for the good care I had taken of my well-loved favourite."

The life of the country squire may have its charms, but a farmer's trials are many, and the breeding of edible stock seems attended with as many difficulties as the breeding of race-horses.

"Yes," grunted Master, in reply to a question addressed to him in his agricultural capacity; "I've begun the year well; I've got three lambs worth ten shillings each, and I lost two sheep worth three pounds ten apiece."

If he was particular about his food and drink—and very wisely, for hath not the sage observed that the man who respecteth not his stomach deserveth to crawl on it?—old John was not ultra-fastidious about the cut of his clothes.

He was being measured for a new suit.

"And how shall I make it, sir?"

"Make 'em as you dashed well please, and then you can't blame me," chuckled Master.

A great walker, it was in the course of one of his long tramps round "Bottombarley," in company with Shirley Brooks, that Master first met Willie Goldberg, "the Shifter," that erratic little genius to whom the *Sporting Times* of the 'eighties and early 'nineties was to owe so much. A chance-met companion, Shifter made himself so amusing, that he was invited to call in Fleet Street, and soon became one of the humorous pillars of the paper.

And it was not long before the reputation of the new recruit as a wit, with an outlook on life, and a philosophy all his own, became known to every "Pink 'Un" reader, and the only semi-fictitious chronicles of the adventures of the inseparable Shifter and Blobbs furnished amusement to the world they moved in.

But at times the pair were disconcerting to their most faithful admirers.

For example. There was a guileless rustic, who regularly read his *Sporting Times* and found a due and proper amount of mirth therein, and he thought that the writers of such a journal

would be merry, sparkling souls. So he sought out Blobbs and Shifter, ordered vast quantities of food and drink for them, and sat waiting patiently for the inevitable coruscations of wit. For long he waited, and plied them with champagne. At last said Shifter suddenly to his fellow scribbler:

"Peter, I have been thinking over something for a long time. If you or I were to die suddenly, who would bury us?"

"My dear Shif," replied Blobbs solemnly, "by a curious chance the very same thing struck me in bed this morning. I suppose Master wouldn't leave it to the parish?"

And then the host departed, and it was alleged that when last heard of he was enjoying the epigrammatic conversation of the inmates of the Accident Ward at St. Thomas's Hospital.

But Shifter was apt to be disconcerting to his admirers. A "Pink 'Un" of the old days, known to his intimates as "Shiny Bill," was responsible for a vivid description of Shifter's triumphal entry into Margate on a Sunday morning. Said he:

"As Willie's train was due just about lunch-time, and some half-dozen boys who had been having a glass of wine in my cellars were particularly desirous of meeting the polished little wit who had so often made them laugh, we went in a body to the station. And there lurched out of the London train a small man, with a long nose, and a two days' growth of beard, carrying, somehow, a very shabby portmanteau, three disreputable hats, a billiard cue, a very large haddock in a very small mat basket (for someone who always declared that there was only one shop in Drury Lane where they smoked haddocks properly), two dormice in a cage, and a tame squirrel in his breast-pocket. The silence that came over my group was positively oppressive."

Probably the most dastardly scene that ever occurred outside the Courts of Justice happened in the Strand during the hearing of that forgotten *cause célèbre*, the Dilke and Crawford case.

"Where's Mr. Shifter?" had demanded Master one morning on his arrival at the office.

"Gone to the Law Courts, sir," had replied the office boy, and Corlett went to Shifter's desk to look for the article he required. The first thing he saw, inscribed on a half sheet of paper was this deathless verse:

"Master may talk of the good things he knows,
We hear what he's got to say:
But we never should think of backing his tips,
Because we ain't built that way."

And he went in search of the laureate.

Meanwhile strange scenes were being enacted before the Law Courts.

Said Peter Blobbs, communing with himself: "While this Dilke case is on, I will wait in the crowd outside the Courts, and make it hot for anybody who turns up." And he waited, and presently he saw Shifter emerge from the crowd.

"Hul-lo, Crawford, old chap—how *are* you?" yelled Blobbs.

"What! Dilke, of *all* people!" cheerfully responded the Shifter. And then, while the populace debated whom to lynch, Master hove in sight.

"If there isn't Captain Forester!" screamed the pair, to distract the attention of the many-headed; and a portly editor and proprietor fled across the road into the first door that happened to be open—that of a cheap restaurant, where he consumed thirteen fourteen-penny table d'hôte lunches before the waiting mob consented to disperse.

But poor old Shifter had not quite that veneration for the Courts of Justice which is so desirable if it is your aim in life to become healthy, wealthy and wise.

There was once an impressive scene in Judges' Chambers—the indomitable face of the recalcitrant creditor, the stern expression of the prosecuting solicitor, and the perplexed look of the kindly Judge.

"Can't you make an offer, or name a date of payment, Mr. Goldberg?"

"No, my lord."

"But I don't understand how you have got so involved. You earn a good income. Can't you give me some idea how you spend your money without ever paying any debts? You speak of lunches, and 'shows,' and cabs, and dinners, but I want you to give me something like a synopsis of your daily life. Why can't you?"

"Well, my lord," replied the little Shifter hopelessly, "does your lordship take me for a blooming panorama?"

An entirely healthy dislike for the law and its processes animated Corlett's chief humorist, and affected his outlook on

many subjects not, at first sight, connected with legal proceedings.

For instance, being turned on as deputy-assistant dramatic critic to Cecil Raleigh, then writing for the paper under the peudonym of "Sir Walter," the little man entirely upset the smooth passage of a play at the old Princess's by a personal reminiscence from his stall.

Said the character on the stage:

"I am so timid, so nervous; I could never face a judge."

"Neither can I," agreed Willie loudly and warmly. "When I was at Nottingham—"

But the remainder of the confidence was drowned in the indignant uproar of the gallery and the tramplings of the chuckers-out.

But as the deputy critic himself observed: "Gay indeed is the life of the journalist who is supposed to be witty and to chronicle the rumours of life in London. He goeth out to dinner, and revelleth in epigrammatic conversation, and saith unto himself that, with a little writing up, this will all read marvellous well in the paper. Then he goeth to a theatre, or a music-hall—or two, or three music-halls, and encountereth *flaneurs* and ladies of the stage, who tell him funny stories, and his soul waxeth happy within him; then he goeth out to supper, yea, and to his club, and eateth good food and drinketh good wine. And he waketh in the morning at the accusing voice of the master-printer, observing that they are four columns short, and his memory of those epigrams and stories knoweth his aching head no more. And he saith to himself, 'Never mind, I jotted things down in my note-book,' and he openeth the same and findeth, 'Bessie lunch at two—Romano's,' and he curseth the day he was born, the while the master-printer continueth his slumbers and waiteth, waiteth ever."

A master of finance, was the Shifter,—in flashes. One dull day of fog and financial depression, he paused unthinkingly at a second-hand bookstall in old Holywell Street, and mechanically picked a sumptuously bound volume from its shelf.

He opened it idly, but as the full purport of the printed page soaked in on his brain, his eyes brightened, and his figure once more became alert.

Now, when the then Sir Thomas Brassey was voyaging in the Bahamas in the noble old "Sunbeam"—still in commission, by the way—in order to ascertain which way the Gulf Stream

was built, or to check its speedometer, or something of the sort, he threw overboard a couple of hermetically-sealed soda-water bottles, with a little flag and a button on top.

Each bottle contained a notice to the effect that the finder would receive the sum of £5 on forwarding it to Sir Tom, and, in order to facilitate the task of identification, Lady Brassey very thoughtfully inserted a careful drawing of the very two bottles in her book "In the Trades and the Tropics,"—the identical volume the Shifter held in his hand.

So it came about that the very next morn Sir Tom received a small hamper containing a couple of Schweppes' soda-water bottles, with flag and button complete, and strongly impregnated with Tidman's sea salt, accompanied by the following note:

52, Fleet Street,

Dear Sir Thomas,

While cruising off Waterloo Place last night I ran foul of the enclosed bottles, and having opened them, and read the enclosed notice, I take the first opportunity of forwarding them to you. A cheque for £10, payable to bearer will oblige.

Yours obediently,

W. Swillington Shifter.

And then the fun began: soda-water bottles came pouring in by rail, van, and parcel post, and it was rumoured that the backyard at Normanhurst was impassable and that bottle-racks were at a premium.

On another occasion the little man's financial imagination soared,—positively soared on ten-thousand horse-power pinions.

An historic meeting had taken place in Romano's bar; a meeting in comparison with which the meetings of Blucher and Wellington, Stanley and Livingston, Lloyd George and Krassin, were as water unto wine; Shifter had been introduced to Joe Thompson, the leviathan Australian bookmaker.

For a moment the possibilities of the situation silenced him, but only for a moment.

"Fancy," he whispered to the Roman, "fancy the bliss, the unutterable rapture of taking the Antipodean 'Knock'! The utter joy of 'going for the gloves' with a man who has taken his passage for Sydney, and must—positively *must*—sail before Monday!"

"Missa Shif, you clever man," pronounced Romano solemnly; "you come over to my cellars, best in London."

There was on occasions a naive simplicity about the Shifter in his relations with the wild bookmaker.

"Now then, sir!" screamed a Jew bookmaker, as, in all the pride of a new gardenia, and an old suit, Shif swaggered into the Ring, "what d'you want to do?"

"Do?" replied Willie, with immense scorn; "why, win some bally brass, to be sure. What d'you think I'm here for?"

Or again.

"Ducat, sir, Ducat!" whispered an eager tout to Shif, as he stood outside the Rutland, mentioning the name of a forgotten runner in a forgotten race at a forgotten Newmarket Spring Meeting.

"Not unless I've taken anything that disagrees with me. Why? Do you?"

And another tipster went his way cursing the sordid lack of appreciation on the part of a purblind public.

And it takes something to defeat the persistent tipster, as an actual letter received by one of the largest trainers at Newmarket will demonstrate:

"Wombwell, Nov. 21st.

Dear Sir, I fortunately Seen Your Address in the *Sporting Chronicle* I state these few lines to you—asking a Request of you if you are in the line of giving Infirmation on the *turf* as a *Sportsman* I should like to take underhands to be a Client of your on Moderate terms. I am a young man that attends Horse Racing a good deal with view to selling Infirmation and I have Gone Very bad this last twelve months. I hope you will Return to me by p. as soon as possible on what *terms* You would give me Your best Infirmation for the Season and by Returning to Me on a fair scale I will forward you a Handsome Present out of Each winner you Send me. I will keep your Infirmation as a Secaret. I work on own strength Wishing you to Return by post Your Obedient Servant——"

But perhaps the bun for the most shameless attempt to extract racing information goes to a still living barrister—now a K.C.—who shall be nameless. Charlie Hibbert was summoned at Doncaster for furious driving on the part of his chauffeur, and, when he stepped into the box, his counsel proceeded to examine him to rights.

"You are well acquainted with the nature of an oath, Mr. Hibbert?"

"Perfectly," replied Hibbert, with a stare of surprise.

"You are sure of that?"

"Quite sure," replied Hibbert, his amazement growing.

"Then, in that case—remember that you are on oath—is, or is not Mercutio going to win the Cambridgeshire?"

Laughter is said to be a solvent of most ills, and in the laughter which followed a much reduced fine was imposed.

Old John had a healthy contempt for the racecourse and advertising tipster, but their wiles amused him.

In the train back from one Chester meeting, a tipster in the carriage commenced talking to him, and the old man listened with interest.

"But," he broke in at length, "how long have you been at the business?"

"Very nearly twenty years, guv'nor!"

"Then," grunted Corlett, "if there be any truth in what Thomas Carlyle tells us, that the population of this country consists of so many millions, mostly fools, how is it that you have not made your fortune and retired long ago?"

"I don't know 'oo this 'ere Carlyle is," he snorted contemptuously, "but you c'n tell your friend Tom this from me: tell 'im Cheerful Charley says that for one fool as is born into this world, there's *ten* lookin' for 'im!"

And talking of tipsters.

Now, "Jimcrack" was the telegraphic address of an enterprising tipster, and his clientèle was in the habit of wiring him: "Have you anything new to sell to-day?"

One of his little circle, having looked on the wine until it was most of the colours of the spectrum, sent off a telegram, the writing of which was a trifle shaky. The sender had a couple more whiskies and sodas and awaited a reply. It came.

"Yes. One sooty mungaby, four ring-tailed lemurs, one pair porphyrios, two albino ravens, ditto ruddy flamingoes, three pair demoiselle cranes, one clouded iguana, two pied mynahs, one hunting cissa, two pair black-breasted peewits, five capucin monkeys, three polar bears, and fine collection Tonga war-clubs. Why not come and inspect?—Jamrach."

And with pallid face and shaking hands a would-be plunger made up his mind to take the pledge once and for all.

As an example of the sort of tip some people will take—to

say nothing of the letters trainers sometimes receive—here is a copy of a letter received by Brewer, in the days when All Black was running:

"Honoured Sir,—We are all backing your horse on Saturday. We had a very big funeral here to-day, and after tea we had a few drinks and cigars, and all being black, a member of the party said All Black, so we have taken the tip. Excuse me taking this liberty. Yours truly."

On yet another occasion Shifter's financial genius came to his aid.

As Corlett and Shirley Brooks were entering Romano's arm-in-arm, they were petrified to see Shif drive up to the door of the Strand restaurant in a private victoria.

"Not a word!" whispered Willie; "It belongs to Bessie Bellwood, and she took me for a drive to her dressmaker's. She's being fitted for a dress, which takes her goodness knows how long, and I'm supposed to be waiting for her, and the prestige of the turn-out—liveried coachman and all—has so far raked in on credit two brooms, a pound of lump sugar, a case of whisky, three ready-made greatcoats, a tame monkey, and a 4-ounce bottle of camphor liniment,—not to mention that the only expense incurred has been beer for the driver!"

And if Shifter kept her waiting, the immortal Bessie was quite equal to expressing her annoyance in appropriate language. Miss Bellwood had the gift of summing up a situation.

A certain rival serio once bored a festive little gathering, at which Manchester's Duke was present, with a totally unnecessary and entirely apocryphal account of her pedigree. She could hardly have swaggered more if she had been descended from the Mastodon itself, or the Prehistoric Ape, or the Pterodactyl, and the audience was frankly bored, but there seemed no remedy until the cheerful soprano of the Bellwood rang out:

"Well, your grandfather may have been a bloomin' Emperor, but, anyway, your mother sold coke to the man who ran away with my aunt!"

In later days, like the Bellwood, that cheery soul and great artist Marie Lloyd was no respecter of persons, and some of her remarks on the pretensions of folk whose self-importance amused her were mightily to the point.

Once upon a time someone persuaded her to be a spectator of a civic function, and as a would-be dignified little alderman

peacocked past in full civic regalia—robes, fur, gold chains and whatnot—Marie eyed him quizzically.

"Oh my!" she observed brightly, "who's the funny little old gent with the pear-drop tummy?"

But the Bellwood's ideas of history and its values were revolutionary, to say the least of it.

One evening at Romano's someone essayed to tell a little story. They listened, and then someone else kindly remarked:

"Thanks. It is as old as Noah."

"Old as Noah!" sneered the great Bessie, "why, that would make it *quite* modern. It's as old as William the Conqueror!"

Poor Bessie.

Once upon a time Miss Bellwood came to the conclusion that she had been basely slandered by a certain music-hall rag, and, as was her merry wont, she went to see about it in person. Then did an erring editor become a model of obsequiousness; an abetting editorial staff the standard of suavity. They agreed that she had been grossly wronged; they even produced the sparkling wine of reconciliation.

"Talk about fairly spiking my battery!" Bessie subsequently explained at the Royal Music Hall. "Why, I went to the office to set about 'em, and they was that nice an' affable, my dear, that I couldn't be anything but a bally lady!"

And Newnham-Davis had his experience of the diplomacy of the great Bessie.

Dwarf was on service in India when Shirley Brooks died, and some six months afterwards came home on leave. Lunching one day at the Roman's, Bessie and Kim Mandeville were at the next table, and Bessie told him that she had an admirable portrait of poor old Shirley, and asked him if he would care to come to her house to see it. So Bessie, Kim and the Dwarf drove there, three in a hansom.

The door of the house was opened by Bessie's little niece.

"There's a man in the drawing-room with a paper," said the little girl.

Bessie had evidently expected something of the kind, for she snorted like a war-horse. The man in possession came to the door of the drawing-room. He was small and apologetic. Bessie snatched the document out of his hand, and rushed upstairs. A minute more and she came down again—having thrust it into a bedroom fire—a model of injured dignity.

"What are you doing in my house, you mean fellow?" she demanded in the tones of a tragedy queen.

"Oh, Miss Bellwood, you know you've snatched it away from me and burned it!" said the wretched little fellow.

"How dare you say such a thing! How dare you trespass in my house!" came from Bessie, and the wordy warfare continued until the little man rushed into the dining-room, flung open the window, shouted to a policeman who happened to be outside, and offered largesse to anyone who would go and fetch an inspector and the solicitor who had caused the furniture to be seized. When Bessie heard that an inspector of police was coming she pronounced herself abundantly satisfied.

"He shall arrest you for forcing your way into respectable people's houses, and you'll go to penal servitude," she said, consolingly, and led the way into the drawing-room.

Dwarf would have given large sums of money to have taken his departure at this period of the proceedings, but it seemed cowardly to do so. Kim,—poor, weak, delightfully-mannered Kim,—subsided on to a sofa, and said nothing. Dwarf stood by the fire. Bessie seated herself in the most comfortable arm-chair. The mild little man sat on the edge of a chair quite close to the door. Bessie was quite at her ease, and carried on a cheerful monologue, pausing now and again to call the apologetic little man in possession a "mean, untruthful dog." She told her audience that she was going to have a nice piece of steak for her tea; she enlarged on the excellent shape of the drawing-room to contain a rat-pit; and she gave her version as to the law-suit over a broken contract which had resulted in the visit of the little man with the legal document.

Presently came three thunderous raps at the street door. The little man darted out to open it. As he did so the noise of a crowd outside was heard. A police inspector came in, and stood with his back to the drawing-room door. "Now then, what's all this?" he said, as he got out his note-book.

The little man talked and Bessie talked.

"One at a time, please," said the inspector.

Just then something which sounded like a whirlwind came down the passage and jumped at the drawing-room door. The inspector pushed back to keep the door from opening. The thing outside pushed to get in. The inspector stood back, and in burst a little Jew solicitor, hatless, breathless, and sweating

with haste and anxiety. He shouted at Bessie, Bessie shouted at him, and the little man joined in.

"Take all their names as witnesses!" the little Jew yelled to the inspector.

The inspector turned to Kim, who had sat quietly while the storm raged.

"Your name and address, sir?" he said.

Bessie reeled off his titles and his various great houses with the splendour of a city toast master. The inspector looked at her to see whether she was spoofing him, and then jotted them down.

"Your name and address, sir!" he demanded, turning to Dwarf, who said that he had nothing to do with the case, and refused to be mixed up with it in any way.

"We must 'ave 'im!" shrieked the little Jew; but when the Dwarf said that he was going to leave the house, and shook hands unhurriedly with Kim and Bessie, the inspector made no move to stop him.

The road was full of people as he went out of the open front door and: "'E's the burglar," was one suggestion; "No, 'e's 'er agent," was another. A week afterwards he met Bessie again, and she talked of the affair as if it had been quite an ordinary incident of everyday life.

"Oh, and that little man, my dear! He was the nicest little fellow I ever came across! He had his meals in the kitchen, and did up the whole of the back garden for me. And he came up into the drawing-room to hear me try over my new songs, and said that they would knock them all silly!"

On one memorable occasion an entirely well-meant effort on the part of the Bellwood to cheer the depressed failed miserably.

A certain lordly landowner who chanced to find himself at Romano's in company with the fair Bessie became pessimistic of the immediate future of the country.

"There will be misery indeed this winter," said he impersonally, "for the corn has been an utter failure in nearly every district."

"Never mind, old cock!" interrupted Bessie cheerfully, "there's still enough left in my right boot to stop a bally famine!"

And he never spoke again.

Not but what the Bellwood had a proper sense of the dignity of her position.

When that well-known character of those light-hearted days, Jim Selby, was running the Brighton coach, he pulled up at the "Old Ship" one fine morning with his wife beside him on the box seat, and a friend behind her. From the hotel portico stepped Bessie and the Duke of Manchester, but the former almost instantly turned back again, exclaiming in tones that all could hear:

"Oh, no! If I can't have the box seat I don't go!"

In a whisper Selby asked his wife to go behind, which she gracefully did, and the great Elizabeth Anne ascended to the coveted perch. Inwardly resenting this somewhat churlish bit of usurpation, Manchester took his seat opposite the deposed ladies, and the coach started.

Bessie's volcanic nature rebelled again, however, at this neglect, and as the coach swung round the crowded corner by the "Albion," she had turned in her seat and was loudly addressing the ladies behind her with:

"Here, steady your leaders behind there, you two, an' leave that young man alone! He's *my* little bit o' cracklin', let me tell you!"

But there was another belle besides the Bellwood who made theatrical and peerage history, poor Belle Bilton, who died in 1907, and who, twenty years earlier, was perhaps the prettiest woman in all London.

The daughters of a recruiting sergeant at Woolwich, who had married a lady in the stock company in the old theatre of the garrison town, Belle and her sister Flo made an early appearance on the stage, and soon migrated to the London halls. Keenly ambitious of social distinction, Belle married young Dunlo when his financial outlook was anything but rosy, despite the fact that she might have had countless "rings on her fingers, and bells on her toes" in other directions.

It was perhaps with pardonable vanity that, on coming into the title, Belle informed all servitors of her elevation to the rank of Countess; and it was an excess of zeal that caused the call-boy to blunder.

"A gentleman called for you just after your first entrance, my lady," he announced; "and he ses as he'll wait for you up in the grand tier bar."

"Who is he?" asked Belle.

"He is the Count, Countess," replied the youth magniloquently.

One of the fairest of stage "Pink 'Uns" was Nellie Farren, who at one time was a not infrequent visitor to No. 52, and saw more than one Lord Mayor's show from the vantage-point of the grimy plate-glass window.

It was in her honour that Newman Noggs first produced the sheets of clean white blotting-paper on which he was wont to spread the sandwiches in the little side office, where in his working hours he sat and addressed wrappers, and asked his invariable question: "Gamblin' to-day, cockie?" of the members of the staff.

Nellie was one of the kindest-hearted women known, but she was very superstitious, and one of her superstitions was that there would be no luck in the theatre if there were any other Nellie in the programme. The consequence was that all other Nellies had to find new names, and Nellie Massey, for example, was re-christened Blanche.

Her two most successful songs, she always said, were "The Little Street Arab," written by Sir Frank Burnand and Meyer Lutz, and "The Jolly Little Chap All Round," written by the "Pink 'Un's" Ballyhooly. These songs gave her the dramatic chance she wanted, and she made them popular in London, and all over the English-speaking world.

Nellie Farren was the grand-daughter of the great William Farren, the greatest Sir Peter Teazle the stage has seen. She was, therefore, niece to the younger William Farren, a most admirable actor. Ireland could claim her as a daughter, though Nellie had little that was Irish about her except her warm-hearted wit.

It was somewhere about 1864 that she first appeared in London. She was not more than sixteen years of age at the time, and had been brought up at a dame's school with Augustus Harris and his brother Charles amongst others, though she was older than either of them. Her first appearance at the old Gaiety was on the night it opened in 1868, when Meyer Lutz was the director, and Robert Soutar, her husband, the stage manager.

When Nellie Farren took her cottage at Sunbury, she determined that there should be fresh eggs for breakfast in the morning. So she went out and bought the very finest fowls she could find. They were really handsome birds, with brilliantly red combs, and gorgeously plumaged tails. They were a bit noisy, it is true, and crowed loudly at unearthly

hours, and though they were highly picturesque, strange as it may appear, they laid no eggs—greatly to the mortification of their little owner.

One of the Honorary Secretaries of the Nellie Farren benefit at Drury Lane was my old fellow "Pink 'Un," Horace Lennard, who always vowed that there was but one unpleasant incident connected with it,—which, if true, should constitute a record in these gatherings of temperamental and jealous "stars." And the creator of the incident was not what Jimmy Davis would have called "one of the play-actors," but a member of the Royal House.

King Edward, then Prince of Wales, had bought a box, but was unable to attend, and, with his unvarying thoughtfulness and kindness, sent word that it could be sold for the benefit of the fund, so Lennard filled it with latecomers at two guineas a head.

Hardly had he done so when a messenger brought word that Prince Christian had arrived. He had heard that the Royal box had been reserved, and had come for a seat in it.

There was nothing to do for it but to turn the other people out, and while this was being done, the old man, who could be exceedingly nasty when he liked, did not disguise his bad temper. What he said in English was not polite, but what he thought in German must have been positively frightful.

V

INTERVIEWS AND "STUNTS"

The Shifter as Interviewer—Gub and Giroflé—The Mad Horse Dentist—Edward Spencer Mott—"The Rum Cull"—C. P. Flockton—Royal Ascot—"Across the Course"—An Interview with the Senior Steward—The Bend or Scare—A Diplomatic Reply—The Poisoning of Orme—Kennedy Jones—Two Press "Stunts"—Jacques Lebaudy—The Emperor of the Sahara—Posting a Proclamation—A Court Appointment—Fleet Street at Work—Holt-White—The Siege of the Savoy—The Man of Mystery—The Triumph of Holt-White—The "Damned Smiling Villain"—Saved by a Woman—Mrs. D'Oyly Carte—"One Thousand Pounds Reward"—The Free-lance and the Duke—His Impetuous Grace—An Improvised Poison Theory—The "Scoop"—Living on Horseflesh—"K. J."—Masterful Methods and *naive* Boyishness—Stunts—The Time of Day—The "America" Cup—The Iron Heel of Officialdom—The Sale of *The Times*—Lord Northcliffe—"The Absent-minded Beggar"—Moberly Bell—Secret Negotiations.

ON a memorable occasion, in one of his political fits, Corlett deputed the Shifter to obtain the views of a certain minor statesman on the topic of the day. But if his proprietor was eager, Shif was not; different people look at things from different points of view.

For three-quarters of an hour Willie waited patiently in a tank of a study, until his temper was ready to pick a quarrel on the slightest pretext. Presently, to the sound of invisible trumpets and drums the semi-great personage entered, and observed majestically:

"Please forgive me, Mr. Goldberg, it was very wrong of me to leave you so long by yourself."

"Considering there isn't anything in the beastly room worth pinching," snorted the indignant interviewer, "except perhaps the clock, and that's too dashed heavy to carry, you might keep your dirty insinuations to yourself!"

And another attempt at imposing a sense of responsibility on the utterly irresponsible failed.

But Shifter's "interview" had not quite the same element of risk attached to it that had an experience of his colleague, Nathaniel Gubbins. Gub's interviewee was a wild animal, the mad chestnut mare Giroflé, which was at the time under the

charge of a German horse dentist named Loeffler, who combined the dangerous industries of tamer and trainer of mad and sorry specimens of horseflesh. His marvellous experiments with the mare Giroflé were the theme of much gossip during the Craven week of 1884, and coming off the Heath one fine Tuesday, Gub was cheerily detailed by Corlett to see the much talked-of trainer.

For a consideration, Gub would at that time have interviewed any man or beast, living or dead, and in a quarter of an hour he was in Giroflé's box, talking to the Teuton, while the mare's owner, Walton, the American "plunger," waited discreetly in the yard outside. The rough pony, whom the mare loved, and who was her constant companion, was clearing out the manger all by himself, while the mare, without cloth or headstall, was making frequent grabs at the interviewer's waistcoat.

"Mind her not!" said Loeffler, "she won't hurt you."

Still, Gub noticed afterwards that but two buttons remained on the waistcoat.

The mare had the reputation of having killed two men in two minutes and a half, and her interviewer began to feel that he would gladly have exchanged positions with a lion-tamer, but, such an excellent thing is confidence, that he soon found himself seated on the straw beneath Giroflé's belly, picking up her forefeet, without resisting her actions.

"Take the time from me," commanded the trainer, "or she will surely kill us both!"

"I wouldn't have been in your sandals," said Walton, her owner, as the trio subsequently sought refreshment in an adjacent bar: "no, sir, not for the entire treasure in South Car'lina!"

Next day, Gubbins wrote about the adventure in the poor, dead "Bird o' Freedom," and soon afterwards Loeffler himself called on the writer at No. 52, insisting on an interview, armed with a stout hunting-crop, and a revolver of the bulldog pattern plainly outlined in his hip-pocket.

He "had something amusing to dictate for the paper," and for an hour Gubbins stood it, and then wished to postpone the remainder. But the man was obdurate; the gleam of madness was in his eye, and there was nobody else on the premises but the boy who inked the counter. There was nothing for it but to write it all, and it was set up and published next day.

And in his daily paper that next morning the interviewer read

how the tamer had been brought before a stipendiary, and remanded, for going for his landlady's husband with a carving knife.

Gub sent the printed record to the magistrate as some explanation of the prisoner's dealings with wild beasts, and his probable state of mind, and after the remand, thanks mainly to the assistance of Sir John Astley,—the "Mate,"—Loeffler was entrusted to safe custody, whence he subsequently emerged, to resume the practice of his old profession as a horse dentist.

Few of Corlett's staff had the experience of the world of Edward Spencer,—"Nathaniel Gubbins."

There were few walks in life he had not trod, from Eton, soldiering and racing in India, to theatrical touring in "fit-ups," and when he could be induced to "reminisce" Gub was worth listening to. Particularly amusing was he on the subject of his theatrical experiences, and a favourite yarn was of a week's engagement at the Theatre Royal, Portsmouth, then under the management of that quaint personage, Harry Ruttley.

Gubbins was engaged to play Charles Bangham, in "The Brand from the Burning"—the naval audience liked their drama "hot and hot"—and all Monday morning rehearsed the tragedy, the manager the while jerking quaint and abusive remarks at the people on the stage from his standpoint at the back of the pit, where he stood with a huge umbrella under his arm. Rehearsal over, an adjournment was made to billiard rooms, where the time was whiled away at Carambole. The manager, who had followed on, drank at least four quarterns of gin, as he sat, moody, but far from silent, at a small table in a corner.

Then darkness came, and the theatre opened its doors to the nobility, gentry, and seafarers, and the actors fluffed and fogged along merrily. And in Act II, just about the middle, with the prompter missing, there came a dead pause, and a silence which could have been heard aboard the old "Victory."

And then, from the back of the pit, came a shrill, small reproachful voice, full of gin, fog, and snarl:

"Cannon off the red, ye beggar!"

Old Ruttley, known in the profession as "the rum cull," had a plain, forcible way of expressing opinions on men and things. Born in a travelling circus, he had acquired a thoroughly practical and thoroughly unrefined idea of the British

drama which was always startling, and sometimes alarming. And, by all accounts, an amusing life his underlings led of it.

He was a Vincent Crummles, with the addition of a fine flow of repartee and slang, a mixture of Romany and Billingsgate, with a bit of his very own particular added on. He was never known to get the worst of a bargain but once, and that was a month or two before a London actor came to Portsmouth on a "starring" expedition. The agent was as bland of demeanour, "wide," and soft-spoken as any Jew; and he fairly talked old Harry into signing an agreement, the fulfilment of which would leave the signatory but the barest of profits, even with the house reeking with humanity nightly.

And when the manager had thoroughly mastered this fact (too late to save himself) he did "sentry-go" outside the front of his theatre, complaining bitterly to every acquaintance who greeted him:

"Cockie, I'm had!"

He was a great stickler for conventionality, and was usually to be found, at some period of the entertainment, "taking the house" from just behind the back row of the pit. "The Duke's row," with its sucking navigators, was frequently a source of trouble to the manager, and, with but little police supervision to assist order, a gory combat on the benches immediately behind the five gentlemen in the orchestra was by no means a rarity. But what old Ruttley could not and would not stand in any shape or form on the sacred premises was the cracking of nuts. Barcelonas drove him mad, and once, during the performance of "Othello," whilst the hero was in the middle of his pet soliloquy, a tar in the centre of the pit started the objectionable practice. The manager, umbrella in hand, "placed" the offender from afar off, and after some difficulty approached him from behind, "crooked" him in the back of the shirt-collar with the umbrella handle, and dragged him out of the auditorium with the quaint remark:

"You something squirrel! D'ye think ye're in church?"

Fertile in repartee was the old manager.

C. P. Flockton (who died some years ago in the States) was the leading man, "Digby Grant," and was anxious to be introduced to the manager. This came off on the Monday morning, and "Flocky," who had jerky methods and mannerisms of the Irving type, and was always scratching the back of his neck, bowed to the local authority with all the grace of a courtier.

"I suppose, Mr. Ruttley," presently hazarded "Digby Grant," "that you a—act—occasionally?"

The old man drew himself up.

"*Act*? ME ACT?" he replied with bitter scorn. "Act be sugared! What's it brought *you* to?"

An interview, with less risk attached to it than the Giroflé encounter, in which Gub was concerned, was with "Jim" Lowther, then Senior Steward of the Jockey Club. The interview occupied precisely forty-five seconds.

During his term of office as Senior Steward, Mr. Lowther had to preside at two celebrated cases; one of which was the "Bend Or Scare," now almost forgotten of men, although it created a sensation at the time. A discharged stud groom had confessed that Bend Or and Tadcaster had been changed as foals, and that Bend Or, who had but recently won the Derby, was in reality Tadcaster. The inquiry was held at Mr. Lowther's house in Grosvenor Street, the reporters not being admitted until the close of the first day's proceedings, when, in the dining-room, a *résumé* was delivered by the Senior Steward himself.

Sherlock Holmes and his Watson were in the womb of time, but Gubbins did his best to anticipate the pair, as he lay low on the watch to get the very latest and most confidential news.

Mr. "Charley" Brewer, the owner of Robert the Devil, and the objector, was not to be drawn on the subject, but, for the whole of the first day, Corlett's henchman played Casabianca, with intervals for refreshment in Bond Street, "Limmer's" being headquarters, the big window of Mr. Morris's establishment affording an excellent view of any likely-looking witnesses, most of whom, however, proved like the deaf adder of history, the discharged stud-groom in particular vehemently declining to give tongue.

The case was decided in good time on the second day, and by accident and good fortune, Gub met Mr. Lowther immediately afterwards, and a direct question as to the result produced the following diplomatic reply, given with emphasis and deliberation:

"We have decided that the colt by Doncaster, out of Rouge Rose, won the Derby."

And, after revolving the dictum in his mind, the would-be perpetrator of a journalistic "scoop" decided privily that the "exclusive" information was not quite the revelation he had hoped for.

But however that may be, history tells us that whereas the alleged Bend Or was subsequently responsible for Ormonde, who begat Orme, who begat Flying Fox, who begat Ajax and many others, the alleged Tadcaster turned out comparatively worthless, although, after the necessary "alteration," he won a little hurdle race at Nottingham. And the mention of Orme reminds me of an amusing hour spent in the smoke-room of Simpson's no longer ago than 1915, when the alleged "poisoning of Orme" came under discussion, and I was given the full, true and particular account of how a young reporter, whom impecuniosity had deprived of all reverence, had unceremoniously obtruded himself on the privacy of the then Duke of Westminster in his reserved compartment on the journey from Chester, and by deft suggestions, hints, and theories impregnated the somewhat suspicious ducal mind with a hurriedly improvised poison theory.

And the name of the young reporter was Kennedy Jones.

Two of the most amusing "press stunts" in the unrecorded but glorious annals of Fleet Street were the "poisoning" of Orme—the late Duke of Westminster's great horse—and the elevation of the eccentric millionaire Jacques Lebaudy to the rank of Emperor of the Sahara.

An Emperor takes precedence of a mere horse, so let His Saharan Majesty have first place.

Some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and others have greatness thrust upon them. Lebaudy contrived all three.

He was born to greatness as the twin-heir to the richest beet-sugar manufacturer in the world. He achieved greatness by his pioneering work in aviation. (The almost forgotten Lebaudy airship was the father of the Zeppelin and the present dirigibles.) He had greatness thrust upon him: he was created Emperor of the Sahara—by a Press agent.

When Lebaudy annexed the Sahara—which is very far indeed from being the sterile waste of sand popular imagination conceives it to be—there was much diplomatic trouble, and he came over to England to interview Lord Salisbury, putting up at the Savoy Hotel. Staying at the Savoy was one of the most popular pressmen in London; a fat, jolly, impudent fellow, with a fiendish sense of humour, loved by all Fleet Street. So, one day, when time hung a trifle heavily, the Press agent posted a notice on one of the pillars of the entrance hall of the hotel—the old entrance hall on the Embankment—which stated simply

that Jacques Lebaudy had assumed the title of Emperor of the Sahara, and would thank the guests and staff of the hotel to address him as "Majesty."

News of the joke spread, and the perpetrator began to be a little nervous of the possible consequences when, on the following day, he received a message that the Emperor of the Sahara wished to receive him.

With a face of solid brass, the Pressman bowed himself into the presence, to be informed that his notice had merely forestalled Lebaudy's own idea, and that the eccentric millionaire had already decided to create himself Jacques I, Emperor of the Sahara. Meanwhile, as a reward for his intelligent anticipation, would the Pressman accept a post on the Imperial Staff? Obviously, such intelligence, such foresight, would be invaluable to a newly budded Emperor. And what post would he care for?

For a moment the sheer splendour of the stunt left the newspaper man dumb.

"What post?" repeated "His Majesty," imperiously, and his new subject clutched at the first Court appointment that presented itself to his mind.

"P-poet Laureate!" he blurted with intense emotion.

Fleet Street, of course, received the tip about the new Empire and its new Emperor, and the first emissary to arrive was the genial, strapping, author-journalist Holt-White. Other scribes from rival journals followed hot-foot, but though the Poet Laureate professed himself willing to do anything in the world for them, including sitting up all night and assuaging the thirst of the thirstiest, he could not—or rather would not—procure the craved-for interview with the "Emperor."

So the scribes took the next best line. They wrote Lebaudy up as the "Man of Mystery" and he became the topic of the hour. Their editors sent the brightest and brainiest of Fleet Street's young men to put up at the Savoy, with orders to camp on the threshold of the "Court," and to get that interview, or—the sack, but the interview was unattainable.

At nine o'clock every morning Lebaudy, pale, debonnair, would walk into the hotel, gaze with a gentle mocking smile at those who had sat up all night waiting for him, and vanish—up the lift.

The horrid fact began to dawn upon the watchers that the "Emperor" was inaccessible. Faithful servants of the Savoy

sat on chairs at either end of the passage in which His Imperial Majesty had his suite, and not even wild promises of pensions for life could induce them to betray their trust. The " stunt " went on for weeks, and the " Man of Mystery " loomed bigger and bigger in the Press. Then the interview took place, and the man to achieve it was Holt-White. Let him tell the story in his own words, as he once told it to us of *Town Topics*.

" Those who have not experienced a similar chase," he said oracularly, " cannot possibly understand my feelings of tremulous triumph as, at last, I had my hand on the handle of the ' Emperor's ' door, and found that it responded to my touch. It was one of the most pregnant moments of my life. I stepped inside, and closed the door behind me.

" The ' Emperor ' was engaged in the exceedingly commonplace task of writing letters, and, at my entrance, he looked up and then set down his pen.

" ' Sire," I began, ' now that we are at last alone . . ."

" The ' Emperor ' rose and smiled. He was a slight, clean-shaven, pallid young man who affected American tailoring, but his smile was wonderful. For sheer inscrutability it had the sphinx in a far-back seat. He said not a word, but slowly backed, as though I were Royalty, and not he—to the corner of the mantel-piece, which he proceeded to lean against in a nonchalant manner. He went on smiling. Advancing, I swept him with a rapid fire of questions. He continued to smile. I grew angry. I, who had interviewed so many of the famous, to be baffled by a brand-new ' Emperor ' ! I was debating whether the end of a red-hot poker would extract a ' story ' when, as that redoubtable serial-story writer, Edgar Wallace, would put it —in one sickening second I learned the ghastly truth.

" All the time that he smiled, and smiled, and smiled—oh, the damnéd smiling villain !—*the hands the ' Emperor ' held so carelessly behind his back were pressing the button of the electric bell.*"

Even then the " story " might not have been wholly lost to Fleet Street, but a woman saved the " Emperor." The late Mrs. D'Oyly Carte, a great lady in every sense of the word, caused to be conveyed to the " interviewer," in the most tactful way in the world, a hope that he would do his best to prevent journalistic enterprise from overstepping the bounds of hospitality.

The interview was suppressed, the siege of the Savoy was

raised, and then it was discovered that the "Emperor" had not only baffled Fleet Street; he had used it, for, thanks to the booming he had got, the financial prospects of "Sahara Limited" had risen high.

In the year 1892, in the columns of every newspaper of note was blazoned the following advertisement:

"ONE THOUSAND POUNDS REWARD.—Whereas on the 21st of April last, at Kingsclere Stable, in the county of Hampshire, the racehorse Orme, the property of His Grace the Duke of Westminster, was wilfully poisoned, the above reward will be paid by the Duke of Westminster to any person who shall, within one month from this date, furnish such information as shall lead to the apprehension and conviction of the person or persons guilty of the said crime. Information to be furnished to Messrs. Lewis & Lewis, Solicitors, Ely Place, Holborn, E.C."

Though nobody was brought to justice, the infernal deed was done by two men. One died some years ago; the other told the horrible story in the smoke-room at Simpson's.

One beastly April morning in 1892 two shabbily dressed and unattached Pressmen stood in the private bar of the Albion in New Bridge Street, opposite Ludgate Hill Railway Station, sipping their half-tankards of bitter beer. They were free-lances in the truest form Fleet Street understands the term—men, for journalistic purposes, wholly untrammelled by social, political or religious opinions, ready to sink themselves, body and soul, in any journalistic adventure. We will call them Box and Cox.

Cox went to the door, and, calling a passing newsboy, bought the halfpenny sheet containing a digest of the morning paper's news and early racing and sporting anticipations. He glanced through the columns and paused at a headed "stick" of front-page matter, which stated that Orme, the property of the Duke of Westminster, a favourite for the Two Thousand Guineas, had been stopped in his work owing to tooth trouble, and that Loeffler, the horse-dentist, had removed an incisor, but that saliva of a particularly offensive nature still oozed from the colt's mouth.

"There's a story in this, properly handled," jerked Cox. "Where's the Duke's London house?"

"Upper Grosvenor Street," said Box dispassionately. "But with your coat still stinking of moth-balls you wont get past the first under-footman."

"We shall see," replied Cox, and leaving the tavern, he boarded a 'bus for Hyde Park Corner.

The Duke, he was told— the ducal menial becoming communicative when the subject of racing was broached—was still at Eaton, but was returning to town on the following day. A few questions elicited the information that His Grace invariably reserved a saloon on the 11.30, which reached London at 3.20, and Cox's further pursuit of the matter was shelved for the night—fourteen and elevenpence, the third-class fare, representing an impossible expenditure of a non-existent capital.

The next morning's bulletin from Kingsclere was more serious. Salivation had increased and the trainer, old John Porter, had wired for a famous vet. to come down at once.

"Once he makes his report the bubble's pricked," announced Cox with immense decision. "I've got to see the Duke on his way to Grosvenor Square."

A penny omnibus took him to Broad Street Station and a reckless expenditure of fivepence landed him at Willesden in time to see the Chester express glide in on the main line. There was no difficulty in locating the Duke. All alone in a first-class saloon sat the biggest ground-landlord in the greatest city in the world, outwardly calm and unruffled, yet inwardly of an impetuous and domineering nature. Many were the stories of his impetuosity. Had not he once written a stately letter to the Press to explain that his intimates called him "Jack Sheppard" because he always wore his hair cut short, and not, as had been suggested, because of his extreme plainness? Did not he censure, in a Chester paper, the Dean and Chapter of Chester Cathedral for their "strange omission" to toll the Cathedral bell and half-mast the Cathedral flag on the passing of Mr. Gladstone's funeral train to Westminster?

With these and other instances of ducal irruptions in his mind as guides to his plan of campaign, Cox walked up to the carriage door, and doffing his shabby billycock, said boldly:

"Your Grace, I am a London racing journalist, and I wish to speak to you privately on the subject of your horse Orme."

"Get in then—before the train starts," commanded the Duke. From that moment, though he did not know it, Hugh Lupus Grosvenor was in the grip of a ruthless reporter whose soul—and stomach—cried out for "copy."

Cox instantly evolved a theory of mercurial poisoning and the Duke as instantly adopted it. Not only was it a case for the

best veterinary opinion, Cox stated flatly, but the best legal and detective assistance should be invoked.

"I will see George Lewis the first thing to-morrow morning," announced the Duke, "for I believe with you the horse has been got at."

When the Peer and the Pressman parted at Euston, they parted as personal friends of old standing, and so impressed was the Duke with the keen intelligence of his interviewer that he requested Cox to come at once to Grosvenor House in the event of his hearing the smallest particle of news bearing on the momentous subject, a general invitation of which Cox took the fullest advantage.

They parted at 3.30; by four o'clock the indefatigable Cox was in Fleet Street bargaining with the newspapers for the sale of the "scoop." The highest bidder was the then proprietor of the *Sporting Life*, and next morning all racing England thrilled with the news that the Duke of Westminster was convinced beyond all doubt that Orme had been poisoned by a preparation of mercury. From April to July the horse was never left alone for a moment, and, although at one time his case seemed hopeless, his superb constitution pulled him through, and at the July Meeting at Sandown, he won the Eclipse Stakes from such famous animals as Orvieto, St. Damien, Certosa, Gouverneur, and Rouge Dragon.

"And," concluded Cox, as he finished telling us his story of the crime, "during those four months Box and I *lived* on that horse—by running both ends of the controversy. And was Orme poisoned? Certainly he was, but the deed was done, not at Kingsclere, but in the side-bar of the Albion public-house in New Bridge Street, opposite Ludgate Hill Station—and I poisoned him."

As I have said, Box is long dead. Cox, who told the story, lived to play a prominent part in Fleet Street, was not wholly unconnected with the success of the *Evening News* and the *Daily Mail*, had something to do with *The Times*, in one of its phases, and died recently as Kennedy Jones.

Horrific tales used to be told in Fleet Street of Kennedy Jones and his masterful methods, but when we of the old "Pink 'Un" staff became associated with him, his methods had changed, or his masterfulness had softened. It is true that a pallid secretary used to appear at intervals, and with bated breath tell stories of important journalists—"two thousand

a year men, you know"—who in the old days entered "K. J.'s" sanctum full of confidence and self-assertion, and emerged white-faced, nervous wrecks, but, if it ever existed, it was a phase that had passed.

Personally, it always seemed to me that there was a naive boyishness about the man. Business over, he would sit in the smoke-room at Simpson's, or over a table at Romano's, talking for hours with a refreshing simplicity of his early struggles and of his career. And he was entirely unassuming over the experiences which had brought an impecunious provincial reporter to the position of a power in Fleet Street.

Not the least amusing of those experiences were his stories of "stunts" in the early Harmsworth days.

On one occasion, in a slack time of perfect peace, "K. J." entered Fleet Street anxiously searching in his mind for some topic that would spur the dull reading public into a semblance of interest, and, as he passed the Law Courts, he mechanically took out his watch to compare it with the great clock which hangs over the busy Street of Adventure.

The clock had stopped.

With a gesture of irritation, "K. J." was about to replace his watch in his pocket when, with the born newsgatherer's seventh sense, he decided to halt for a moment and observe the passers-by.

Nine men out of ten did precisely as he had done; nine men out of ten drew forth their watches, looked upwards, and, with an angry frown at the stopped clock, resumed their paths.

It was enough.

A lengthy correspondence on the necessity for the synchronisation and regulating of public clocks was obviously demanded, and the demand was met as soon as he reached his office. For days the public scrawled its views on the great "public clock scandal," and supplied the Press with column after column of "live stuff." Then something else happened; some fresh "scandal" attracted the herd's attention, and the public clocks were left to tick or to stop in peace.

The pre-war "America" Cup races were a fruitful source of "stunts."

"K. J." conceived the idea of showing to a crowd blissfully ignorant of yachts and yacht racing the positions of the competitors by means of coloured lights, red and green, and, night after night, huge crowds of "sporting enthusiasts" blocked the

roads in front of the newspaper office, cheering themselves hoarse when a green light proclaimed that the Lipton boat was ahead.

And the racing was a deal more thrilling in the neighbourhood of Fleet Street than it was off Sandy Hook. For that particular Cup series was carried through in a season of flat calms and fluky puffs, and race after race degenerated into a drifting match. In the office, hour after hour went by with no change to report, but with superb impartiality the red and green lights were switched on and off at decent intervals, and the crowd of "yachtsmen" beneath the windows howled applause or groaned despair according to their prejudices. Then a white light proclaimed "Race abandoned," and everyone went home happy.

At last, I believe on the ground of interference with traffic, the police protested, and once more the innocent amusements of the public were ground beneath the iron heel of officialdom.

One of "K. J.'s" stories, which he told with a quaint simplicity, always afforded me immense amusement. It was of the days after he had retired with a fortune from Fleet Street, and was a holder of shares in *The Times*. Lord Northcliffe was anxious to buy "K. J.'s" holding, and very early one morning rang him up at his Finchley place, "Knightons," to discuss the matter. "K. J." was at his breakfast, or in his bath, or merely in a bad temper, for:

"Tell Lord Northcliffe to ring up again later!" was his command to the servant. "And that," he concluded naively as he told the story, "was the first time that I realised I had 'arrived.'"

For the life of me I could not help recalling the yarn of the old merchant mate, who retired from the sea, and for his own amusement and satisfaction hired a small boy to hammer at the cottage door every morning at dawn, and bawl:

"Cap'n wants you on the bridge!"

"What sort of a mornin' is it?"

"Dark as a dog's throat, an' rairin' an' blowin' like beggary!"

"Then tell the cap'n to go to hell!" And he settled down once more to the warm pillow.

Another "stunt" story of "K. J.'s" concerned Kipling's South African War poem, "The Absent-minded Beggar."

Kipling had written the verses, and Sullivan had consented to compose the music—each presenting his fees to the cause

—but when the composer saw the lines, inspiration left him. Precious days passed, and there was no news from Sullivan. The matter was becoming serious, for publicity had started, and the public was agog for the great war poem by Ruyard Kipling, with the musical setting by Sir Arthur Sullivan. At last, in desperation, "K. J." rang up Sullivan.

"But I can't," protested the composer; "I've tried again and again, and I can't. You'll have to get someone else."

"Impossible!" cried "K. J." in alarm. "We've announced you, and you're advertised everywhere. For heaven's sake have another try!"

"It's no use," replied Sullivan, "I've had a dozen tries and I can't strike a setting for them."

"Rubbish!" said "K. J." "Do something, *anything*! Why not do it on the lines of 'Tommy Atkins'?"

"How does that go?" asked Sullivan, and "K. J.," probably the worst singer in Europe, hummed the air over the 'phone. "Oh, Tommy, Tommy Atkins, you're a good 'un, heart and hand, You're a credit to your calling, and to all your native land!" and so on, and so forth. There was a silence.

"All right, I'll try," came Sullivan's voice, and the score arrived just—and only just—in time.

"K. J." had another good story of the beginnings of one of the mill-horses of journalism, who, getting a copy of a certain great daily wet from the machines one darkest hour before the dawn, was so disgusted by the poverty of style of its contents that he went straight off to the office and clamoured for the editor.

"Look here, sir!" he cried when, there being nobody handy to chuck him out, he stood in the presence, "I'm a journalist, and it seems to me journalism is wanted, and damn badly wanted, on this paper!"

The big man stared at his seedy attire, but the intruder forestalled comment.

"Never mind the shabby bags; he'll shine when he strips! Will you give him the chance?"

And the end of it was an appointment for the morning, and one of the best engagements ever made for the paper.

And not the least amusing were "K. J.'s" stories of the negotiations for the sale of *The Times*; of secret meetings with Moberly Bell on Hampstead Heath, where matters could be

discussed as they tramped through bracken and gorse far from the prying eyes of Fleet Street.

In the course of those tramps, Bell confessed many of his troubles to his sympathetic listener, and, incidentally, endeavoured to impress *The Times* tradition on him, at the same time admitting that it was impossible to please everybody. For example, when Mrs. Pearl Craigie (John Oliver Hobbes) produced her play "The Flute of Pan," she was not altogether pleased with *The Times* criticism, and wrote to Moberly Bell, acquainting him with her feelings. And this in spite of the fact that the critic had credited her work with "humour and unmistakable nobility."

Without delay Moberly Bell replied:

"There is one thing, and one thing only, that the Omnipotent has absolutely failed to create. He has made good women, bad women, clever women, silly women, selfish women, and heroines of self-sacrifice, but He has never yet made a woman who can stand—I will not say adverse criticism—but one note of deviation from absolute and unqualified praise. If we had said 'The Flute of Pan' was equal in parts to 'Othello' you would still have resented the 'in parts.'!"

If ever a man could have written an amusing *chronique scandaleuse* of modern days it was Kennedy Jones; it was much to his credit that, in spite of his appreciation for the "stunt," he refrained.

VI

MIXED "PINK 'UNS"

Sir William Harcourt and the Derby—Lord Rosebery—Throstle's Leger—The Trial of Ladas—Lord Rosebery's Record—A Cheshire Cheese Lunch —"One Subject is Barred"—An Unconventional Private Secretary —Lord Alington—Colonel North—The Recalcitrant Match—Fine Trenchermen—The Colonel's Hospitality—The Yankee Grafter—The Duke of Cambridge—Pork Chops—Splitting the Dead-heaters—"Bob" Verrall and the Amateur Riders—Mr. Billy Manning's Shock—George Ede —Roddy Owen's Moustache—The Military Bore—"Garry" Moore— "Chippy" Norton—"The Bloomin' Substitoot"—"Brer Rabbit"— "Garry's" Advice—Custance—Fred Archer—The Visit to Ireland—St. Mirin—Archer's Earnings—The Inland Revenue and the Jockeys—Archer's Methods—His Mental Aberration—The Last Straw—His Physical Handicap —Archer and the French—Hissed by the Mob—Archer's Betting— "Helping Himself"—A Tragic Anniversary—The Ides of March—The Last Scene—Corlett's Last Sight of Archer—Their First Meeting—Archer's Opportunity—Three Great Races—A Winning Record—Archer and Fordham—Archer's Genius.

THERE were few habitués of racing whom Corlett did not know and by whom he was not known. But once, to his immense surprise, he saw Sir William Harcourt in the Club Stand at Epsom, of which the latter had been made a member for the day. Corlett had a long conversation with him, in which Sir William declared that it was quite a mistake to suppose that that was his first Derby. On the contrary, for some years he formed one of an Epsom party which included Thackeray, John Leech, Jacob Omnium, Shirley Brooks and two or three others, to whom Lord Londesborough, on his coach, was host. Sir William was very short sighted, consequently racing did not appeal to him.

Other great men of a past generation Corlett could recollect on a racecourse were Mr. Gladstone at Epsom, wearing a white hat, and busily engaged in an argument while a race was being run; and Lord Beaconsfield at Newmarket, as the guest of Baron Rothschild, at whose house he was the hero of a somewhat ludicrous adventure which cannot well be told in cold print.

Lord Palmerston and Lord Derby—the "Rupert of debate" Earl—were of course constantly seen on racecourses, to the indignation of certain mob orators. Corlett had a story of one such gentleman whom he heard declaiming in Arlington Square on Sunday morning after the Derby of 1860, in which both Lord Derby and Lord Palmerston were interested.

"An'," he demanded loudly, "where was Lord Palmerston at this time? 'E was on Hepsom Dahns, a-chaffin' of Lord Derby! An' what was Lord Derby doin'? A-chaffin' of 'im back—an' *that's* what you workin' men pay your money for!" he paused, and then added with intense venom: "If Lord Derby was to set abaht chaffin' me I'd 'it 'im on the nose!"

At Doncaster there is a big white house, the last before the race-course is reached, and in a yard at the back of this house John always vowed that he saw Lord Rosebery lose the St. Leger.

On the other side of the wall the busiest scene at that moment in England was being enacted; but in that yard all was as quiet and as still as though there were not a race-meeting within a hundred miles. In a small group, looking on at four horses walking slowly in a ring, were Lord Alington, Sir Fred Johnstone and Corlett, and of the four horses, one was of no account, not being in the St. Leger, but merely keeping the favourite company, and to one no attention was paid, she being so much eclipsed by the two magnificent colts in front of her.

Yet she beat them both, and achieved one of the greatest surprises in the history of the race.

The three horses were Ladas, Matchbox and Throstle, and it was Lord Rosebery's courtesy that lost him the St. Leger.

The yard was for the time being his, and, but for the shelter it gave her, the wildly excitable and nervous Throstle would have been a very different animal at the starting post to the collected filly the public saw.

And, when at his best, a magnificent colt was Ladas.

When Lord Rosebery went to witness his trial as a two-year-old, Mat Dawson, on account of illness, was unable to be present. On his return, Lord Rosebery reported that Ladas had come in by himself, but that the trial amounted to nothing, as the trial tackle was obviously bad.

"My lord," was Mat's reply, "when one horse beats another as far as Ladas seems to have done, you may depend on it that he is something out of the common."

And so the event proved.

It was remarked in connection with a contest for the Chancellorship of Oxford University that Lord Curzon took the great honours of the University, whereas Lord Rosebery, addicted to horse-racing, left without taking a degree. But the story needs completion. Lord Rosebery became Prime Minister of England, and three times won the Derby. Much as one may admire Lord Curzon, these are marks that will take much wiping out, and Lord Curzon has yet to achieve the least important of them.

But in his political days Lord Rosebery was properly squelched by the little twelve-year-old daughter of a Clyde engineer. When the peer dropped in for a talk with her father, she was busy with her home lessons, and, with characteristic geniality, the head of the House of Primrose asked her what she was doing.

"I'm daein' ma sums for the schule the mornin'," she replied, without looking up.

"I doubt if I could do them," said the peer, with a smiling glance at the slate.

"Then," said the child with conviction, "ye wouldna pass the foorth standard, an' ye'd be pit i' th' bottom class wi' the wee bairns!"

It was a memorable day for the "Pink 'Un" staff, memorable for more reasons than one, when Corlett invited Lord Rosebery to a luncheon at the Cheshire Cheese.

While waiting in the old panelled room of No. 52 the guests permitted themselves to wonder what line of conversation the literary and sporting ex-Premier might take, and the racing experts were similarly perturbed, for one asked which of the Earl's horses first ran as the Illuminata colt, and another, which of his steeds, winning the City and Suburban under Jim Gallon, brought into vogue the exclamation "Good old Four Quarts!" With about thirty seconds to think up all the illustrious animals that had sheltered at Durdans, there was not much time for prompting the vagrant memories of others, but just as things were coming into trim, the conversational batteries were spiked by the stern injunction of old John:

"Now bear this in mind"—(his favourite prelude)—"one subject is absolutely barred: racing and racehorses!"

And not ten minutes afterwards, Lord Rosebery broke the rule by opening with Ladas.

Before me as I write is a letter referring to that luncheon party:

" I have not forgotten that lunch," writes the guest of honour, " I don't think I have ever been really well since ! "

Peer of the realm, and once Prime Minister of England, Lord Rosebery must ever have had a refreshing streak of the unconventional, for fancy a Premier of these days having, as the Primrose Earl once had, a private secretary whose poetic temperament permitted him to perpetrate (concerning Paderewski):

" And oh ! the hair upon his head !
Hay-coloured with a touch of Titian !
He's under contract, so 'tis said,
To keep it in this wild condition.
All those who wish a thatch like Pad's
Should buy—(This Space to let for ads.) "

Another " Pink 'Un " reader famous in turf history was Lord Alington, whose partnership with Sir Fred Johnstone was known as " the old firm."

In the House of Commons Lord Alington did not often speak, but when he did he was eagerly listened to. There was a humorous twinkle in his eye and a quiet earnestness of delivery that enforced attention.

On one occasion, when speaking on a horse question, and of the cost of breeding high-class horses, he made allusion to the high fees that had to be paid.

" And, Mr. Speaker, having paid these fees," he added, " the mare will come smilingly up to you next year no more in foal than I am now,"—passing his hand as he spoke over his long, spare figure. He was raised to the Lords in 1876.

The last time he was seen on a racecourse was at Ascot, when he insisted on seeing his filly Flor Fina, of which much was expected. He was accompanied by a hospital nurse; and a member of the Ring, who had been a good deal hit by him in days gone by, observed commiseratingly:

" I remember the time when he needed no nurse to look after him ! "

There was a story Corlett sometimes told against himself.

In his day he was a fine trencherman, as are, or were, he maintained, all the men born in 1841, and at race meetings he was a frequent guest of the " Jolly Colonel,"—as Colonel North

was called,—who was also a trencherman, and, of unbounded hospitality, above all things loved to see a man enjoy his food.

One day, entering the room that North had taken in the Grand Stand at a big meeting, Corlett found him in dull, contemplative mood. Things had not pleased him, and he proceeded to open his heart.

"What cormorants these people are here!" he said. "A man comes in, says 'Good morning, Colonel!' and eats a sandwich. Down it goes as a lunch, and I have to pay ten shillings. Another comes in and says 'Good morning, Colonel!' and eats a plover's egg, and off he goes. Another lunch charged for!"

Corlett's back was beginning to rise, and he was about to offer the Colonel the price of his lunch, when a smile of gladness came over the old Yorkshireman's face.

"Now when *you* come into the room, John," he continued, "I know that I am going to have a run for my money! Sit down and we'll have a bottle together!"

And they sat, and nearly missed the big race.

And such was the Colonel's hospitality that in the old days of open-air luncheons at Goodwood—pleasant enough in sunshine, but less pleasant in rain—he once solved the difficulty during a storm by going out and buying a gipsy's tent, lock, stock and barrel, and had it placed under the dripping trees. Later, of course, elaborate tents became the rule, but the old Colonel practically set the fashion.

There are chairmen and chairmen, but the frivolous had a certain justification in claiming bluff old Colonel North as the ideal functionary for a cheery gathering ever since the day when, at a Theatrical Fund dinner, at the Metropole, he thus proposed "Literature":

"Gen'lmen, the next toast on the list is 'Litrachoor,' coupled with the name o' me old friend Walter Pallant. Now Walter, me boy, up on your hind legs an' tell us a blue 'un!"

And it was the old Colonel to whom, wishing to light a cigar, his hostess offered a box of matches. One or two he tried to strike and failed, whereupon the lady, noticing that he was not using the prepared side of the box, said:

"Strike it on the bottom, Colonel."

"A good idea," he exclaimed, "I didn't think of it!" And then, to the horror of the lady, he tightened his trousers and applied the recalcitrant match with vigour.

To the Colonel, food and drink ranked high among the pleasures of life, and he liked to see others partake of them.

Into Gracechurch Street one day there adventured a certain "grafter" to call upon Colonel North, and, sorely against his wish, the Yank was taken into the Woolpack. Being much pressed to drink, he reluctantly ordered a "raspberry soda." Restoratives having been administered to the four queenly barmaids, who had swooned simultaneously, the business interview took place and ended satisfactorily. When the Yankee got outside, he said confidentially to his pilot:

"Say, what a hustler this feller'd make if he'd on'y quit this saloon work!"

Whilst the Colonel observed to his *fidus Achates* as they strolled back to the office:

"My God, Jack! If only this Yankee could mix a little honest drink with his natural graft, there'd be no limit to his possibilities!"

An occasional guest of the Colonel at Avery Hill was the old Duke of Cambridge, and on one visit they had rare sport in the woods and killed a fine head of game. Then came luncheon—a far more serious matter with the Colonel than the shooting. Having done themselves well, the Duke observed that he thought it was about time to go and pay some attention to the remainder of the pheasants.

"Remainder of the pheasants!" exclaimed the Colonel. "There are no more. You've shot 'em all! Let's have another bottle."

As a matter of fact, the old Duke was fond of good living, and as good a trencherman as the Colonel. A dish he specially delighted in was a green plover pudding, and thereby hangs a tale.

He was a guest, for shooting, of Lord Burnham, then Sir Edward Lawson, at Hale Barn, and his host, knowing the Duke's weakness, had prepared a surprise for him. Luncheon came, and after one or two dishes, the *bonne-bouche* was to have been produced, but nowhere could it be found. Eventually it was discovered that the beaters had eaten it, under the impression that it was a beef-steak pudding provided for their especial delectation.

Throughout the Service it was at one time believed implicitly that the Duke loved pork chops better than any other meat,

and at every "Inspection Lunch," he found pieces of pig offered him. At last he revolted, and the word went round the regiments that to give the Duke pork chops was the surest way to secure an unfavourable report. Then he was always offered lamb cutlets.

As becomes a good trencherman, the old Duke was distinctly a heavyweight. It was during a Spring Meeting at Newmarket, and just prior to the decision of a race at one of the posts round the corner, that the Duke entered the palinged enclosure sacred to the judge's box and seated himself on some number boards. When the horses had finished in a bunch, and the judge was unable to separate the first two, it became necessary to disturb the Duke to get at the board with "0" on it—the top of the lot, as it happened—and so strained by the old soldier's 17 stone that it was cracked across the middle.

"Dear me, Mr. Robinson," exclaimed the Duke, seeing what he had done, "I've outdone you, for I've split the dead-heaters!"

Among the racing readers, a staunch "Pink 'Un" was "Bob" Verrall, and many were the stories he used to contribute to the roseate pages.

His experiences at the scales at a certain Hawthorn Hill meeting would alone have filled a whole issue of the paper, for most of the young officers who rode were as sublimely indifferent as to how they weighed out as if they had been carded to ride bareback.

"I really cannot pass you without your saddle," said Bobbie to one offender.

"Come, come," coaxed the boy; "it's a bit officious of you, surely, because my horse is already saddled. I weighed the damn thing myself last night, and it drew exactly thirteen pounds, I give you my solemn oath. Deduct that from the bally weight, can't you, and let me get away."

Another, who had been fully dressed in time for the first race, though he did not ride till the third or fourth, re-appeared in the weighing-room directly after the second event, and loudly asked for the stewards, whose permission he needed.

"Permission for what?" asked Verrall.

"To change this satin cap for a bowler, 'cause I want to go across the course an' get a bit of lunch, damn it!" snapped the youth.

And it is said that the greatest shock which Mr Billy Manning

MR. ARTHUR COVENTRY

Caricature by Ralph Rowland

ever had was when he was weighing out an amateur for a gentleman riders' race at a country meeting.

"You want 4 lbs. more," said the Clerk of the Scales.

"All right," responded the novice serenely, "I declare 4 lbs. underweight!"

Corlett always declared that George Ede was the best gentleman rider he ever saw, with "Roddy" Owen and Arthur Coventry bracketed second.

A couple of years before Ede was killed, he lay for some time between life and death at the Greyhound at Croydon from the effects of a fall. Burly Ben Land, who trained for Lord Poulett, loved him, but business was business, and Ede subsequently often described the dilemma in which old Ben was placed.

He had a horse running on which Ede had won a few days before, and the danger was a mare that had run second. The trainer, full of emotion, and wiping his eyes, with a broken voice implored the patient:

"Pull yourself together a bit, George; try and pull yourself together! Did ye win easy on Jampot the other day?"—(sob)—"How are we to bet if ye don't let us know? Pull yourself together, George!"—(sob)—"Did ye win easy?"

Ede always vowed that he saw the whole thing as a dream, but could not concentrate his mind to an answer.

"Roddy" Owen's position in the ranks of gentlemen riders is a matter of history, and the story of his race-course prowess is for all to read, but here is the story of "Roddy" Owen's moustache.

There be many soldier tales told on the growth of hair; one, for example, in which Lord Cardigan figured when he went to London and obtained permission for his regiment to appear as Hussars. Another is of "Roddy" Owen.

It was "Roddy's" ill-luck, as A.D.C. to Sir Evelyn Wood, to have to convey a message to a corps of Heavy Cavalry—the Royals, I fancy—that the officers must grow moustaches, instead of adhering to the clean-shaven face of the Old Heavies.

Now, "Roddy" himself shaved as smooth as a baby's shoulder, so as to look well in a racing cap, and the message which was returned by bearer was a polite request that Sir Evelyn would let the regiment know what hair-restorer his A.D.C. used.

" Roddy " Owen took to soldiering seriously, so seriously that he could not abide the military bore.

A retired veteran was in the habit of driving the members of a small club in India to the verge of suicide by his lectures on military tactics—tactics of the Brown Bess and crossbow epochs. One night, for the hundred and first time, he was describing his disposition on the occasion of a long-forgotten frontier affair.

" My cavalry was on my right flank, my artillery was in position; my infantry occupied an impregnable position on a precipitous ridge. The enemy—"

With dangerous suavity " Roddy " broke in.

" Excuse me interrupting you, sir, but where did you put your fleet? "

And a fine type of " Pink 'Un " was " Garry " Moore, and a fine type of Irishman, with the Grand National honours gained by Liberator to his credit.

He won the big steeplechase at Bristol on Scots Grey when the late John Frail conceived the idea of starting a rival in the West to the Grand National. The Prince of Wales was present when Scots Grey won, and there was a big splash generally, which, however, was not long maintained.

Lord Fitzhardinge had a party for the meeting, and chartered a special train for Bristol and back. His knowledge of the ring was not profound, and the well-known " Chippy " Norton entered into negotiations with him on the platform as the " special " was about to leave, his lordship having expressed a desire to back a filly of William Day's called Victoria for the Lincolnshire Handicap.

" Chippy " played his part beautifully. His lordship wanted 1,000 to 100; but all that " Chippy " would lay was 800 to 100, and he stuck to his guns for all the world as though he intended to pay if he had lost. Presently the whistle was blown, and " Chippy " reluctantly (!) consented to lay the bet, and then added, impulsively, as the train was beginning to glide out of the platform:

" Ten hundred to one I've laid you. Well, 'ere, m'lord, the whole o' my book, ten thousand to a thousand! "

It was a beautiful bit of acting, but all that " Chippy " got was the £100.

A quaint personage was " Chippy " Norton.

It was at a bygone Lewes meeting that that curious but

amusing individual once took saddle exercise on the South Downs in a new pair of cord breeches. On his return to his lodgings he was considerably chafed, wherefore he told his clerk to see if the landlady had any fuller's earth.

"She ain't got none," said the pitchmy, after due inquiry.

"Well, dammit, me lad," cried "Chippy," warming up at this seeming indifference to his sufferings, "see if she ain't got no bloomin' substitoot—powdered starch or somethink."

Once more the penciller went below, presently re-appearing, somewhat warily, with a cardboard box.

"The best she can do," he said, "is some shredded wheat breakfast-food."

And the rest of the story is wholly unprintable.

But, harking back to "Garry" Moore. The Fifth Lancers were quartered in Ireland, and there was a race meeting at the Curragh. "Garry" was running a horse, but no one could find out anything about it, and so people were afraid to bet. "Ole Brer Rabbit,"—Captain Fred Russell,—not liking to be seen taking too many sodas and whisky in one place, went down the course and had one somewhere else. He noticed "Garry" do the same, and then saw him pull out a soda-water bottle and ask to have it filled with whisky. "Brer" followed him, and saw him give it to the mare. On this, away "Brer" went to the Ring and backed her for all he could get on, and she won in good style. Everyone wanted to know how he had found it out, and he described what he had seen, adding:

"I *knew* "Garry" wouldn't waste a pint of whisky on a mare that wasn't trying!"

A great philosopher was "Garry."

Once in riding a steeplechase his horse fell with him and deposited him in a ditch. "Garry," after pulling himself together, pondered, and then mused aloud:

"Two miles from home, wet through, horse gone, bruised all over—shall have to walk every yard of the way! What the blazes took me 'chasing?"

"Why d'you do it then?" shouted a curious bystander.

"Because I like it, ye damn fool!" roared "Garry" fiercely.

In 'chasing "Garry" practised what he preached, and there is a world of fine advice in the few lines he wrote to a friend on the eve of the latter's first steeplechase:

"Wish you luck. You will not come unstuck; but wear a low

rein, a stiff shin, keep your elbows in, and go like the merry winds of Hades!"

Full of pluck and good humour, he was the sort of man that Lever would have delighted in, and qualified to shine in "Charles O'Malley."

Custance, the jockey, yet another racing "Pink 'Un," was in Ireland on that first and last visit of Archer's, a few weeks before the latter's death.

That Cus was a bit argumentative, not to say garrulous, at times, his greatest admirer could not deny; but there was at least one occasion on which he entirely failed to get hold of his audience.

It was in the smoking-room of a big hotel in Dublin one night when forty men were talking at once, and the witty, loquacious "Garry" Moore as good as any ten of them. It fretted Custance to keep silent; he would rather have talked than eaten; so presently, planting a restraining hand on "Garry" Moore's sleeve, he cried:

"Here, I can't get a word in edgeways! Let *me* have a say now."

"Roight, me boy," cried "Garry," "if ye want to have a say, just shtep out on the bal-cony and cry 'To hell with Parnell!' an' it'll be the lahst 'say' ye have in this country, for they won't let ye back to this room aloive!"

Having been to some extent a protégé of old *Bell's Life*, and out of the saddle before modern methods of race reporting came into vogue, Custance never quite cottoned to the modern journalist. He had no sympathy with big "star selections" and "overnight doubles"; his heart was still with the scribe who used to open his story with: "The larches were just breaking into their delicate lining of Batthyany green, and the gorse showed bravely in the familiar hues of I'Anson's jacket—" Hence it came that he sometimes had "no stomach in his belly" for the present day scribe at all.

An acquaintance whom he had long forgotten approached him outside the jockeys' gate at Croxton Park one day. The poor fellow had tramped it all the way from the station at Melton Mowbray, and was blown, hot and dusty; yet the sporting spirit blazed within him, and he asked the captious Custance to pass him through.

"But how?" asked Cus. "As you weigh about fourteen stun' you're too big for a jockey, an' you're too grubby an'

shabby for a trainer. I have it; come along—you're just the spit of a blanky reporter!"

But beyond question the most famous amongst the riders who were devout "Pink 'Uns" was Fred Archer, whom John Corlett had known from his boyhood, and who, a month before his death, was accompanied on his first and last visit to Ireland by the paper's contributor "Jim the Penman." "Garry" Moore, Haughton, the bookmaker, and Custance, who had relinquished the pigskin for the starting flag, were also of the party.

The Irish trip was a triumphal progress, and Archer was lionised by high and low.

Upon entering the weighing-room, which, by the way, had been fresh painted, and generally done up in honour of the occasion, the "King" jockey,—as they called him,—was seized by the hand by his brother professionals all round, a compliment which touched him greatly, and shortly afterwards, in the paddock, received a welcome from the Lord Lieutenant.

Thursday came, and with it the Lord Lieutenant's Plate, which was to witness the first unfolding of the violet and yellow hoops of His Excellency, and the *début* on Irish turf at once of two old companions in Cambusmore and Archer, the horse having been bought by Archer on commission for the Marquis of Londonderry, with the express view of competing for the Plate.

As the time approached for the ordeal it was plain that Archer betrayed signs of nervousness, it being impossible for him to move without being mobbed, but no sooner had he thrown his leg over the horse, than the old, familiar look of confidence returned to the pale face, and justly so, for, to make a long story short, though the two-year-olds made the pace as hot as they were able, the favourite shot out with the lead three hundred yards from home.

This was the signal for a burst of enthusiasm not often seen or heard.

The crowd burst through all restraint, and, crowding on to the course, cheered and hurroo'd with wild gesticulations, the horses having fairly to run the gauntlet from the distance. The Lord Lieutenant met his horse and Archer on returning to scale in a scene of pandemonium, a testimony of popularity which Cambusmore acknowledged by lashing out viciously, and it was a miracle that no one was killed.

As soon as the "all right" was announced there was more

wild cheering, and everyone started to beg for souvenirs. The Clerk of the Scales begged Archer's whip as a memento of the occasion, and "Sol," his faithful valet, was badgered on all sides for a keepsake of some sort, and one enthusiast, for lack of something better, seized the opportunity of scuttling off with what he called a "blacker"—one of the brushes with which the great rider's boots were cleaned. Hero worship could surely go no further.

Archer returned to England to ride St. Mirin for the Cambrideshire, and,— it is ancient history,—after wasting cruelly, was beaten by a head by Sailor Prince, a horse that had been backed by the then Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, solely on account of his name, and over which Mr. "Abington" Baird won over £20,000.

For over three-quarters of a mile old John Corlett's unlucky Invictus led the field, and Master always maintained that the race would have been a gift for him if he had only been trained. For some days previous to it he had only walked, and for a month he went only one good gallop. When he was a yearling, the horse got away from the man who was leading him, and jumped a hedge, dropping six feet into a lane. The roads were polished like marble by the east winds, and on those hard roads he galloped three miles, going down a hill as steep as the side of a house. That gallop knocked his legs all to pieces, and when put into strong work on the hard ground the weakness in one of the sinews quickly became apparent.

Much has been said and written on the topic of Archer's earnings, but, for obvious reasons, the total amount that passed through his hands during the days of his greatness is impossible of estimation. Those were heavy betting days; whatever they may or may not do in these enlightened times, jockeys actually betted, and Archer was a heavy bettor.

In the year of his death the Inland Revenue folk had a busy time of it amongst the Newmarket people.

Archer was assessed at £10,000, and appealed, but in vain. On being called to produce his pass-book, he explained the uselessness of doing so by the remark that "some of the entries were so funny that he could hardly understand them himself."

Charles Wood also was induced to appeal against an assessment of £9,000, with no better success, and in those halcyon days there was no super-tax, and neither was the rate at the present ghastly figure.

When his money was "on," Archer was not a man to be trifled with.

Captain Machell once had a horse that he knew to have a stone in hand in a race, and backed it accordingly, notwithstanding that a novice was in the saddle. He told the lad that he could not help winning, but that he was to draw it as fine as he could, not wishing to show the horse up. To his amazement he saw the lad make the whole of the running, and come in by himself.

As soon as was convenient after the race, Captain Machell, in a rare passion, asked the boy what he meant by so flagrantly disobeying his orders. The trembling lad replied:

"Well, sir, I heard Mr. Harcher say to another jockey at the starting-post, 'We'll have this young —— over the rails!'—so I thought I had better come away as fast as I could!"

The boy was acquitted with honour.

"You're not second, and you can't object," said Archer, on another occasion, as he drove a dangerous antagonist almost over the rails, and this was for long accepted as law.

There was little doubt that the severe tasks Archer set himself in wasting had seriously undermined his constitution, but equally sure it is, that bold and daring as he was in his profession, Archer was always morally a coward, and could ill bear mental trouble and anxiety. The experiences of his mental aberrations when struck down with grief, on the death of his wife, which followed immediately upon the birth of his only child, were sufficient proof of that, for though it was not generally known, it was none the less true that in his ravings then he betrayed a strong tendency to lay violent hands upon himself.

It is the last straw that breaks the camel's back, and no doubt it was the unnatural strain which he put upon himself in the endeavour to reduce himself from 9 st. to 8 st. 6 lb. in order to ride St. Mirin at his proper weight in the Cambridgeshire that hastened the end of a career unexampled in its success and brilliancy.

There seems to have been a fatality about the Cambridgeshire so far as concerned poor Fred, that being the only event of great importance which he had failed to include in his wonderful record of victories. And Archer was sweeter on his mount than his friends had ever known him, and little did a friend of mine guess how prophetic were his words, when, on the eve of the race, the great jockey said to him:

"I have never won the Cambridgeshire, and if I don't win it to-morrow, I'll never try again."

Much was said and written at the time, and much has been said and written since, contrasting the style of Archer's wasting with that practised by other jockeys.

It is no doubt perfectly true that he depended upon physic, Turkish baths, and starvation for the reduction of his weight, but it was not generally known that it was not from laziness—no one could accuse Archer of that—that he did not waste by walking in sweaters, for the simple and physical reason was that he could not walk, the fact being that his feet would not carry him, and he was seldom seen off horseback, whether on the course, the hunting-field, or on the road.

He was not popular with the French. They could not forgive him for being English, and for having snatched victory from French favourites on more than one occasion, and, a day or so after his death, a writer in the *Figaro* devoted a long article, full of lying insults, to his memory.

Archer never forgot that the French mob had hissed him, and he nursed the greatest contempt for the French race-course public.

It is the fact that not long before his death Archer told one of his most intimate friends that, if he had never made a bet, he would have been a much richer man. He did not say that he had lost money by betting, but indirectly he had. His explanation was that, since it became notorious that he betted heavily, he no longer received the presents he formerly did, and that the money he won by betting did not nearly recompense him for this falling off.

Of later years, when he won a race, it was assumed that he had "helped himself," and was one of the biggest winners, and the owner, instead of giving him a magnificent present as formerly, left him at that.

In 1884, as the first week of the melancholy month of November was drawing to its close, there came over Archer the great sorrow that clouded his life. The minds of many are so constituted as to dread the approach of the day on which in some previous year a great calamity has befallen them. And in 1884, when the existence of Archer was darkened by the death of his young wife, there can be no doubt that his mind became temporarily unhinged, and might have become permanently so but for the zeal and devotion of his warm-hearted

friend, Captain Bowling, who almost tore him from the place of his sorrow, and by hurrying him through many scenes in foreign lands so occupied his brain and distracted his attention from his loss that he returned to England rehabilitated both in mind and body.

The "Ides of March" were, however, to come again.

The second anniversary of the death of the wife drew nigh, and within two days of it the husband was seized by a depressing and dangerous illness. He was at his worst on the day itself, and, enfeebled by long fasting, he had not the strength to battle with the great mental depression with which he was seized.

Finally, the delirium set in, and then came that awful scene—the tall, pale, gaunt, weird figure, with eyes blazing with unnatural light, staggering across the room, pistol in hand; the agonised sister vainly trying to prevent what she felt was coming; the final gathering of strength with which he succeeded in holding her off; the pull at the trigger, an explosion scarcely heard in the adjoining room, and then the lifeless body was all that remained of the man who during his decade of triumph was the preponderating figure on the Turf.

"It was at Brighton, last Wednesday, that we saw Archer ride his last race," wrote John Corlett the week of the tragedy.

"It was a fearful day, at times blowing a hurricane; and what was worse, there came floating over the Downs a raw, cold, penetrating sea fog. Archer was dressed for a race, and in the weighing-room, in the course of conversation, we examined the clothing he was wearing, which was of the thinnest and flimsiest character, nothing but a silk jacket and shirt, with thin breeches, to protect him from the inclement weather. Clad in warm attire, and wearing what is often erroneously called a water-proof, we felt depressed with cold and damp, and caught such a chill that we are satisfied only an immediate return home, and taking remedial measures, stalled off an attack of what promised to be rheumatic fever.

"The following day was bright, but with a cold, cutting wind, and well calculated to complete what the chilly damp of Wednesday began, and it was on that day that Archer first complained of the illness that was to lead to such a fearful termination. On Wednesday he was bright and cheerful and his heart and soul were in his business.

"He rode Mohawk, and it was the last race of the meeting.

The horse came striding up the hill, Archer with his body bent like a rainbow, feet rammed well home into his stirrup irons, heels down, and toes turned out. 'Ten to one on Archer!' was the last shout we heard when the two-year-old, Quilp, who had seemed out of the race, dashed up in three strides and won by a head. That race is photographed in our minds, and we shall always remember it as the last in which we saw Archer ride.

"He had previously told us that, during the Cambridgeshire week, he had gone to bed every night on his return from the course for fear that the savoury smell of some dish or the sight of meat might tempt him into eating. His food for the day consisted merely of a piece of toast and a cup of weak tea. Then, weakened with a Turkish bath, and wearing a thin silk jacket and breeches of gossamer, he opposed—what our system of racing compelled him to oppose—his body to the cutting winds, with cold sea fogs, and fierce rains of the wild downs.

"Our recollections of Archer go back beyond those of any other Turf writer, and our first knowledge of him was stamped in a most peculiar manner in our memory.

"We were one morning on Newmarket Heath, when Mr. Matthew Dawson, pointing to a small boy on a bay horse said:

"'There is a little fellow I shall be able to make a jockey of. He wants "hands" at present; but he is the pluckiest lad I ever had, he will do anything.'

"Calling Archer out of the string he said:

"'My little man, dare you jump your horse into that field?'

"'Yes, sir,' said the boy, touching his cap.

"He at once jumped his horse from the Heath into an adjoining field, and back again, and then took his place, as before, in the string, a smile of satisfaction beaming over the broad, genial face of the trainer."

Archer's opportunity came when Tom French, who was first jockey to Lord Falmouth, died from consumption brought on by over-wasting in 1873. Next to Archer, who stood 5ft. 8½in., French was perhaps the tallest professional jockey ever seen. A more exemplary, well-conducted, modest man never lived, and he was a brilliant horseman. To one like Archer, who was so quick to learn, it must have been a great advantage to have such a man as French for a senior.

In 1873 Archer had already won his spurs as a light weight,

having carried off the Cesarewitch on Salvanos. The jockeys that Mr. Dawson had the highest opinion of at that time, after the decease of French, were Fordham and Chaloner—especially Fordham—who rode for the stable when practicable, and when their services were not available Archer was put up as a stop-gap. It was in this capacity that he rode Atlantic when he won the Two Thousand Guineas in 1874. Six months later, in the same year, his weight was only 6st. 1lb. when he rode the Truth gelding, who was backed to win such an immense stake in the Cesarewitch.

Singularly enough, the race that most affected the fortunes of Archer, or rather that more immediately helped him to the position he secured, was quite a minor affair, and, what is still more singular, he was beaten in it, finishing in the ruinous place of second. He had for masters, however, not disappointed gamblers, but reasonable and appreciative men. The race in question was a small handicap finishing at the Bushes, and the six stone Archer was put up on Andred, who was an awkward horse to ride at the welter weight of 9st. 3lb. After a fine finish, the slashing King Lud, to whom he was giving 7lb., beat him by a neck.

This race did not bear immediate fruit, but, as the season wore on, crack heavy-weight jockeys riding Andred did not get so much out of him as Archer had done, and, as a result of this, he was in the following season promoted to all the honour and dignity of first jockey to the most estimable and successful owner of race-horses of any time—Lord Falmouth.

When it is borne in mind that during Archer's career, he, with the exception of the Cambridgeshire, won every big race, and some of them, as, for instance, the Derby and St. Leger, five or six times, a detailed account of his many victories would weary the reader.

"We will glance over his career," wrote Corlett once, "and select three races on which to dilate.

"We consider his greatest efforts to have been his Derby victory on Bend Or, his victory in the same race on Melton, and his riding of Valour in the Manchester Cup.

"He carried his life in his hand, and fairly earned the Victoria Cross, when he dashed round Tattenham Corner on Bend Or, his near leg carried on the horse's shoulder; otherwise it would have been smashed to atoms on the rails.

"Melton's victory was one of *finesse*.

"Archer knew that he was riding a failing horse, and he also knew that Paradox, when in front, was apt to run 'lazy.' He knew that if he made his effort a stride too soon, Paradox, having been encouraged, would collar him again, and he dare not wait too long. That 'one-two' he gave Melton within a stride of the post will never be forgotten. The horse got his head in front as he passed the post, but in the next stride was hopelessly beaten.

"These two were extraordinary races, but the greatest he ever rode was on Valour in the Manchester Cup. We have often heard him say that if that race were to be run a hundred times on the same terms, probably Valour would never win again, as he had no pretensions whatever to staying the distance. Archer won this race by pure generalship; and, strange to say, in a long distance race, by making running with a non-staying horse. At Manchester, on the mile and three-quarters, there are two or three sharp turns. Directly the flag fell, Archer, utilising the speed of his horse, raced for the first turn, and gaining the inside place, steadied his horse, pulling out in such a manner as to make the field take a wide sweep on rounding. He then, having the advantage of place, raced for the next turn, and repeated his previous tactics, and, gaining many lengths every turn, finally beat Peter, who could have given him a stone or more, by a neck.

"In each of these three great races it was the jockey that won and not the horse.

"In ordinary life, in a trumpery trading dispute, in which, perhaps, two or three hundred pounds are involved, an action is fought in which the law costs will amount to very likely £1,000. On the three races mentioned above, won by Archer, the destiny of half a million of money was determined.

"Comparing these two facts, is it to be wondered at that jockeys are often handsomely rewarded?"

Figures that were considered extraordinary thirty or forty years ago, would in many cases now excite derision, and for that reason it would be unwise to predict that Archer's record, extraordinary as it was, will never be approached.

The following is the winning record since 1874, and one may remark that for thirteen successive years Archer was at the head of the list of winning jockeys, a fact that will be more fully appreciated when it is realised that for some time his natural weight had been 10st. or more:

1874 147	1879 199	1883 232
1875 172	1880 121	1884 241
1876 207	1881 219	1885 246
1877 218	1882 210	1886 170
1878 229		

It will be observed that in 1880 the number was comparatively small, the reason being that in that year, during the busiest part of the season, he was not seen in the saddle, having been savaged by a horse he was riding at exercise.

In considering the above figures, it is only right, in comparing them with the victories of his great rival, Fordham, and jockeys of to-day, to point out that Archer's mounts were, as a rule, picked ones. He was not tied down to one stable, and he always took care to ride the horse that, in his opinion, had the best chance of winning. He would ride for anyone, always provided that full information was given him of the way in which the horse had been tried or had performed in public, and he was satisfied.

Above all things, he loved winning, and it was this that caused Webb to say, "The reason why Archer is so thin is fretting because he can't ride two winners in one race."

To say that we shall never know his like again as a jockey would be idle. The old school said this of Jim Robinson, and then came Fordham, who, in turn, became over-shadowed by Archer. In comparing Archer with Fordham, good judges, including John Corlett, always declared that on Newmarket Heath Fordham was the better man. Archer, they vowed, would never have won the Cambridgeshire on Sabinus, but Fordham would have won on St. Mirin. Per contra, at Epsom, it was any odds on Archer, and most assuredly Fordham would never have won the Derby on Bend Or.

Carlyle defined genius as being the capacity for taking infinite pains. In that sense Archer was most certainly a genius, and he never left anything to chance.

If there was an advantage to be gained by being first at the post, he would be the first man there. If there was anything to be gained by reducing his weight, that weight would be reduced. Nor was he ever known, by carelessness or over-confidence, to throw away a race. He had one object in view, and one only, and that was to win, and consequently he displayed none of the chivalry in riding that caused Fordham to

be looked upon as the incarnation of everything that was fair.

It was in his own house that he was seen to most advantage, and, though having the reputation on the race-course for cupidity, a more princely host never was known. His purse was open to all calls, and was the mainstay of the local pack of foxhounds. "Across country" Archer was quite as great as on the flat, and in the hunting field no one could head him, and few follow. For a time he owned a few race horses of his own, but he soon gave them up, for, as he laughingly observed: "When I ride one of my own there is no one to pay me a fee."

His insight into a race was extraordinary, and he noted all that was going on. Fordham never knew anything except about his own horse.

Archer, in expressing a positive opinion, spoke the simple language of confidence, and his character was totally devoid of conceit and swagger. He had a countenance that lit up wonderfully, the best feature of it being the eyes, with which he always looked you straight in the face. The house he built was a very costly one, and he always regretted it, the more especially as it was in an exposed position, and the contents were notoriously valuable. A burglary committed at Jewitt's made him nervous, and it was not until then that he furbished up the revolver that had been presented to him after Sterling won the Liverpool Cup.

VII

LUCK

Turf Fortunes—King Edward's Luck—Racing Superstitions—Prehistoric Tips—A Verminous Omen—A Tip from Italy—Ballyhooley's Mistake—Cyrus Jay—The Rump Steak Cure—Bishops and Betting—An Appeal to the Bishop of Hereford—The Lucky Winners—The Fly as a Tipster—Cremorne and the Old Castilian—Corlett's Staff—" Free Lance " and " Mandarin " Jones—The Pertinacious Cobbler—*The Tin Trumpet*—William Mackay—The Old School of Trainer and the New—Dying Game—The Castilian Ethics—Paying the Rent—Rolling in Money—The Old Brigade—" Teddy " Coward's Time-table—Uncle Mac—Sir James Miller—" Blood-stained Bill " —" The Knuckle of Pork "—Winnings.

TURF fortunes have hung on amazingly slender threads with a curious frequency.

Had a foreigner come along late in the 'eighties with a hundred pounds in his pocket and taken a liking to Vedette, where would now be that great line which has given us Galopin, St. Simon, Persimmon, La Fleche, William the Third, Memoir, Sceptre, St. Frusquin, Donovan, St. Amant, Volodyovski, Doricles, Diamond Jubilee, and so many other horses of the first rank?

In like manner, when Lord Alington, pointing to Deadlock, said to Captain Machell:

" That mare's worth £500 of any man's money," and received for answer as a jest:

" I'll give you twenty! "

and Lord Alington clinched the matter with a " Done! ", Deadlock was probably saved from the cab-rank. And in that case where would Isinglass have been?

Then again, had Mr. Otto Scavenius kept Mowerina to race in Denmark, where she was born, where would the Duke of Portland have been with Donovan?

Had Bob Howett not put Violet Melrose in a selling race where would Lord Hastings have been with Melton?

And had someone claimed Perdita II when Mr. Benholm ran the same risk with her, where would King Edward's great Derby have been?

The best bargain ever made for the Sandringham Stud was

the purchase of Perdita II., the dam of Persimmon, Diamond Jubilee and Florizel II, and many have been the guesses and the stories about the cost of the mare which was responsible for the Royal Derby winners.

A "Pink 'Un" writer settled the matter once and for all, and here is John Porter's letter to Arthur F. Meyrick:

"Dear Arthur.—The price paid for Perdita II was £900. I bought her from Mr. Faulkner, who raced under the name of Mr. Benholm. No one else had anything to do with the purchase of the mare, though several took the crédit for having done so.—Sincerely yours,

J. Porter."

Kingsclere, October 6, 1881.

There have been few bargains like that purchase.

A supplementary volume might easily be added to the Encyclopædia Britannica devoted entirely to the "Luck" section of the letter "L," with a cross-reference to "Superstitions, racing."

The smallest circumstance has often influenced otherwise sane people in backing a horse, from the almost prehistoric case of the man who, on the morning of the Derby of 1856, came to the Wellington Arms, and, noticing that the letter "W" had dropped out, immediately put his money on "Ellington." "Bloomsbury" painted on a van that blocked the road to a gentleman coaching to Epsom in the good old style was the cause of his winning a big stake on that horse, and "King Lud," in Ludgate Hill, stood out as an obvious tip to all the punters who passed that way on the day he won the Cesarewitch. And there was once a man who used to stray into the old office at No. 52 who astonished his hearers by informing them that he had had a good win over a rank outsider called The Beadle in a Nottinghamshire Handicap. The glad tidings were received with great joy, for the gentleman was one of the most persistent of the great Thursday "tapping" brigade, and, after suitable congratulations, he was asked the reason for his plunge.

"Why did I back it?" he repeated. "Becos' I saw one of the blighters in my bath this morning, an' I took it for a tip."

Old Corlett, himself a staunch disbeliever in omens, admitted being "omened" into backing a winner once at a cathedral service. In the Psalms for the day there came an

encouraging verse, and as he was running a horse that day, he took advantage of it.

Week-day churchgoers should be glad to hear that the horse won by half-a-dozen lengths, and the devout owner pocketed an extra £700.

And I remember a lunch at Romano's at which the old man was forced to admit that at times there might be something in omens.

"Strachino," he grunted, looking through the menu, "Strachino ran in the Craven Stakes of '66; I remember he was by Parmesan. This cheese is well named."

At this moment the head-waiter produced a new little sausage with the hors d'oeuvres.

"This," he said proudly, "is a Salamina di Bellinzona, just arrived from Italy. The gentlemen should try it."

"Salamina," cried Lennard eagerly. "It's running in the 4.15! There's a tip for you; we must have something on that!"

And we did. And it won—at 10 to 1!

"Ballyhooley" Martin came within an ace of having his fortune made by poor Fred Sandys, who died in 1904.

In 1876 Sandys wanted to back the treble event on the strength of a dream: Thunder for the City, Petrarch for the Two Thousand, and Kisber for the Derby. He wanted to take 8000 to 10, but being short of the necessary tenner asked Ballyhooley to find it and go halves in the bet. Ballyhooley either couldn't or wouldn't, so Sandys borrowed a sovereign, and took eight hundred pounds to a sovereign.

And when the treble event came off, a broken Irishman kicked a hole in his hat and retired to his native morass.

Corlett himself had little sympathy with the believers in omens and in dreams, and a favourite story of his was of a *Daily Telegraph* prophet, who, on being asked by that picturesque eccentricity, the late Cyrus Jay, as to what would win a certain race, replied with confidence, and, to emphasise his belief, said he had dreamt that he saw the horse win and his number go up.

Jay was an octogenarian, whose chief claim to fame was that he vowed he had spoken to a man who had seen Dr. Johnson at the Cheshire Cheese. The connection with the gruff old philosopher may have accounted for Jay not being a polite man, and his reply to the dreamer was:

"You can't find winners while you're awake, so I don't see that you're going to do any better when you're asleep."

But in racing, as in life, luck and superstition are mighty undependable guides; far, far more likely than the pursuer of omens, good or bad, to achieve success, is the sturdy plodder who accepts, and attempts to benefit by, experience. Such a plodder was a cheery quaint, old soul known to many as "George," who, following the Bishops' recommendation, religiously devoted a portion of each day to meditation and self-examination. In the old days of the Rutland Arms at Newmarket he would at the close of each racing day take a seat by himself at a table in the coffee-room, and, holding a fork upright in one hand, and a knife in the other,—both fists on the table,—he would in an audible voice review thoughtfully his day's conduct.

"Now, George," he would address himself, "how did ye come to lay 3 to 1 on that horse? You won your money, but you oughtn't to ha' done it. It's only fools as lays odds. George, never you be a fool!"

Once he had had a very bad day.

"George," he said at night in pained tones, "however did ye come to lose all that money? There were things you ought to ha' backed. Why didn't you back 'em? An' there were things you oughtn't to ha' touched. Why did you touch 'em? There's been something wrong all day with you, George. What is it?" He thought hard.

"I have it!" he exclaimed. "You had eggs an' bacon for breakfast! You must have rump steak to be able to tackle them devils!" (meaning the Ring).

Whereupon the cloud cleared from his brow.

And should the captious-minded feel surprise at the association of the advice of Bishops and betting, let them ponder the simple purity of the racing mind as exemplified in the following little episode.

Two starting-price merchants of Glasshouse Street, having a dispute concerning the exact date of the introduction of the Bishop of Hereford's anti-betting Bill, attempted to settle the matter by addressing to his lordship a most civil and gentlemanly letter beginning:

"In order to decide a bet, will your lordship kindly state, etc. . . ."

Singular to relate, however, the letter, although couched in

the politest terms (having, in fact, been drafted by one who had been sent down from Oxford when within a few strides of his M.A.) elicited no response from the prelate.

But harking back one moment to the question of luck.

There is such a thing, of course, and some people possess it, but luck is of different kinds, and there was a devout "Pink 'Un" whose hobby it was to regard himself as the unluckiest of mortals.

The individual I have in mind once backed a horse that came in second. There was an objection, and the winner was disqualified. Did he regard this as a piece of luck? Not he. With a face as long as a fiddle:

"Just my luck!" he groaned, "I can't win money outright like other people do. I've got to wrangle for it!"

On another occasion, with a face of gloom, he told a friend of the death of a distant relation, who had left him an unexpected £300 a year. The friend condoled and congratulated.

"I don't see anything to be congratulated about," he grumbled, "It's just my luck to be left an amount that won't be sufficient to keep me, and will just prevent my doing any work."

In which, perhaps, there was a certain amount of sound philosophy.

"Tipping" may be a science, as some earnest followers of the great game would have one believe, but if so, there would seem to be a far mightier slice of luck about it than is usual with the more exact sciences.

For example, in the dead long ago, the "Pink 'Un's" Old Castilian—"Mandarin" Jones—once took the Derby Sweepstake at the County Club, assisted thereto by the persistence of a kindly house-fly.

Sweepstakes were not unlawful in those days, and the usual card of subscribers to the County sweep in '72 swinging from a gas-bracket in the hall attracted Jones' attention. He was, above all, a believer in omens, and the fact that a fly had settled on No. 19 did not escape his observation. As nothing that happened during the rest of the day presented any sort of sequel to it, however, he might possibly have overlooked the circumstance, had he not, as he strolled into the Club the next morning, seen the identical fly—he swore he recognised it by its expression and encouraging smile—on the self-same number! What was even more extraordinary still, the third morning found it there again!

"Egad!" cried Jones to himself, with that stateliness and importance that gained him his nickname, "there is something in this. I must take ticket No. 19. Bring me a pen, waiter!"

A few days later No. 19—Cremorne—won the Derby, and the Old Castilian pocketed one thousand one hundred badly needed sovereigns.

Nor was he unmindful of his friend, the fly.

He had the sweep card hung up in the hall again, and watched it patiently, but the little tipster never came again—feeling probably that his one good deed duly accomplished he could look after his own amusements. But it would have been to his interest to have put in an appearance.

"For," said Jones, "I would have put the little beggar on loaf-sugar for another year to have seen if he could only have brought me another eleven hundred!"

Corlett gathered his staff and his contributors from all sources.

William Mackay came from the Temple, Gubbins from Eton, as did Finch Mason; Dwarf was from Harrow, Shifter was an Oxford man, Howlett came from a barber's shop in Newmarket, and "Free Lance"—W. W. Wignell—was originally station-master at Didcot on the Great Western Railway, where he was brought in close connection with the Dawsons when they trained at Ilsley: which explains the many stories he had of Tom Parr and Weathergage. Wignell, by the way, died in 1904 at a great age, for he was born in 1826.

The old "Free Lance" was placed in a position to say "good-bye" to the Great Western Railway when Mat Dawson won the Derby with Thormanby, a double event bet of West Australian the Derby, and Catherine Hayes the Oaks, also putting £5,000 into the lucky station-master's pockets.

He was a good deal connected with that extraordinary figure of the turf, Captain J. W. Jones, commonly known as the Old Castilian, late of the Hon. East India Company's Madras Army. The great stake they played for was the Lincolnshire Handicap with The Mandarin, and when the trial horse ran away with a race on the opening day, it looked as though the money was won.

It was not to be, however, and when at Sandown The Mandarin, with the money well down, took the wrong turn when he seemed to have the race in hand, it was necessary to look the Monday settling in the face.

I remember Wignell as a tall, distinguished-looking man, as

WILLIAM MACKAY
"JIM"

straight as a dart, with old-fashioned manners. He had an immense scorn for anyone who in racing or anything else had not acted as a gentleman should do, and was a character of the old school.

After Wignell went on the turf he became a species of tame Boswell to the Old Castilian.

Jones found the society of the old "Pink 'Un" staff in the last degree congenial, and was always on hand on press days. Probably in consequence of this association, he became bitten by the journalistic germ and decided to run a paper of his own. So he started the *Tin Trumpet*, and induced "Bill" Mackay to undertake his front page notes. Old "Wig" and the Castilian did the racing between them, and the latter contributed certain pungent social articles and paragraphs which amused the men about town who did not happen to be those whose foibles were satirically deplored. After a short, chequered and hilarious career, the *Tin Trumpet* ceased to sound. But it ended with a flourish, for in the last number the proprietor and editor "went bald-headed" for men and institutions that had annoyed him.

Said "Bill" Mackay once of the end of the journal:

"He observed to me as he was reading the proofs of that last number: 'No one, my dear Bill, shall ever be able to say that the damn thing didn't die game!'"

Once Mackay asked him to contribute an article on "Social Ethics" to an annual the Live Lord was editing. He said he would think about it. When next the two met, the Old Castilian informed his possible editor gravely that he had looked up "ethics" in the dictionary, and found the word defined as "the science of moral duty."

"Now," he said, "as I happen to be entirely unmoral, I think you had better put someone else at that particular fence."

In the words of "Bill": "One of the best groomed, best tempered, best liked, best hated men of his time was the Old Castilian."

No *laudator temporis acti* was "Mandarin" Jones.

"Now what," he once observed, comparing with his usual emphasis the old school of trainer and the new, of both of which he had experience, "what would have happened supposing I had sent a horse to old John Scott to train? I should have heard nothing about that horse for at least twelve months—

except the account—and then I should probably get a letter—in reply to an anxious inquiry on my part—saying that my horse was just beginning to feel his feet, and that after a couple of months' sweating followed by a little blood-letting, he might be in a fit condition to be tried with Brother to Waterworks, with a view to winning a nice little sweepstake at Goodwood or Hambledon. Bah, sirs! Give me one of the new school—a man who can take hold of your horse at once, even if he has only two legs to stand on, and lets you know a fortnight later that he is going to win the Lincolnshire Handicap! That's the man for my money!"

But optimism was a characteristic of the Old Castilian.

At the Cremorne period of his career he started a West End Club of some pretensions, and was soon in arrears with his rent. The landlord, a punctilious, strait-laced old gentleman, became pressing. The Castilian told him that he should have his money at half-past three precisely on the following Monday.

"But what guarantee have I of that?" demanded the harrassed landlord. "You've disappointed me too often already."

"Every guarantee, and the soundest of guarantees," replied "Mandarin" Jones in his most sententious manner. And then he condescended to details.

"On Wednesday," he said, "a race will be run at Epsom called the Derby. It will be won by a very beautiful animal called Cremorne, the property of Mr. Henry Savile. On that animal I stand to win eleven hundred pounds,—and you had better back it!"

"Good God, sir!" exclaimed the landlord, "I am seventy years of age, and I never backed a horse in my life!"

"Good," said Jones, "Seventy, you say? Then you are not too old to begin. As I have already informed you, the animal will win. That money will be paid to me in Tattersall's on the following Monday at 3 p.m. It will take me precisely twenty minutes to drive to Long's, where I will meet you, and then, say, another ten minutes for the refreshment I shall partake of will make it 3.30, and, at that moment I will, out of the eleven hundred pounds that will be in my pocket, pay the trivial sum that is due to you."

All of which duly came off according to the time-table.

And a few years ago there was still alive—and for all I know he may yet be enjoying this vale of tears—a man who heard the Old Castilian tell the story, and add that he drew five pound

notes in exchange for the cheque, with which he proceeded to cover the floor of his bedroom; then stripping himself to the buff, he solemnly, in his own words, "rolled in money for once in my life, sir!"

The experience must have been a refreshing one, for more often than not the lucky winner was in the financial condition that oppressed him when one evening he sat down to whist with Lord Albert Clinton, "Daddy" Hoof and another. They were all impecunious, but all had great ideas, and guinea points were named, with five guineas the rub.

"And," said the Old Castilian, pulling out some silver and coppers, "three and fourpence ha'penny,—ready."

The old brigade of high and hard livers lasted long and lived happy—or at least, a good many of them did. At Newmarket, in 1908, there was a man who had lived in the brave days of old, and had done daredevil things, even to the extent of jumping through a skylight at Hatchett's, when it was Hatchett's. At that time day and night were one to him—especially night. Everyone seemed to think that he had long "gone over," but he was intensely alive, and the younger generation listened to his lectures, some approving, some not.

Quite in the style of the Old Castilian he had landed at Newmarket full of hope, £10, and fourpence in coppers. When he was greeted by one who had known him in the past, all he had in his pockets were the coppers, the Ring having shown a lamentable want of confidence. The £10, which was all he had in the world, he had staked on King's Champion, at 35 to 10, and when that horse won, veritably by the skin of its teeth, he drew his £45, and had a glass of champagne precisely as the Old Castilian would have done under the same circumstances. The fourpence he pitched to a beggar—again just as the Old Castilian would have done.

It was the Old Castilian who, on an especially dark day, was approached by his soldier servant with the intimation that the milkman would not leave the milk unless it was paid for, the price being a penny. That was all Jones had, and, taking the coin out of his pocket, he opened the window and threw it into the street.

"Never shall it be said that the Old Castilian spent his last penny on milk!" was his comment.

Many years later, the Old Castilian's Derby time-table was

rivalled at Chester by that merry little soul "Teddy" Coward.

A cheery member of the racing, journalistic and stock-broking set was "Teddy" Coward, for seventeen years the proprietor of that crisp little chronicle of Capel Court, the *Rialto*, which, in his hands, was amusing as well as powerful. He made all men laugh, and some men rich, for he was a witty as well as a brilliant journalist, and a generous sportsman always. On the Turf he will be best remembered in connection with the Chester Cup victory of Uncle Mac, a share in which horse he enjoyed.

"Uncle Mac" was the nickname of Douglas Gordon Macrae, for long the leading spirit of the *Financial Times*, who married Miss Florence Levey of the Gaiety. Uncle Mac, the horse, had previously run as Northallerton, and ran his last race under that name in the Great Metropolitan, after which it struck "Mr. Teddy" that a change of luck was eminently desirable. Macrae was always regarded as a very lucky man, so his nickname was adopted, and, as Uncle Mac, Northallerton won the Chester Cup of 1899. And over that Chester Cup "Teddy" Coward brought off a quaint quadruple event.

The day before the race he wrote to Mr. W. J. Cullimore, the well-known Chester solicitor, and legal adviser to the race-course company:

"I am leaving Euston early to-morrow for Chester, and will call at your office at 12.30. I shall be glad to lunch with you in your sanctum in the stand. At 3.15 I shall win the Chester Cup with Uncle Mac, and shall leave by the 5 o'clock dining-car for town."

More than one of those to whom the letter was shown expressed the opinion that the writer did not lack self-confidence, but at 12.30 Mr. "Teddy" turned up at the solicitor's office, The Friary, Chester. They went on to the stand, where a lunch was prepared for twenty people. Uncle Mac won the Chester Cup, and Mr. "Teddy" caught the five o'clock train, and so the quadruple event was brought off.

A genial soul, "Mr. Teddy" was one of the few who did not regard the late Sir James Miller as a 22-carat sportsman, and it was his fondness for his old Chester Cup winner that was the cause of it all.

Uncle Mac ran in the Great Yorkshire, and two days afterwards ran a head-heat with Bishopscourt for the Alexandra Plate. The old horse had a rare gruelling in the race, and his

owner was anxious to divide, and so save his old warrior another bucketting, and even offered to hand over his half of the stake, but Sir James refused, and the dead-heat was run off. At the distance it seemed any odds on Uncle Mac, but the strain was too great, and he was beaten comfortably at the finish, to the disappointment of his owner, who candidly remarked that Sir James should send his winnings to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

But Sir James Miller was ever a lucky man on the Turf. When still on active service, under the shrewd auspices of Mr. "Joe" Davis, he made his first venture on the Turf. After winning a small race or two, he gave £7,500 to John Porter and Sir Robert Jardine for Sainfoin. Thus, in his very first attempt on it, the Derby fell to him as it had fallen to Lord Hastings. To buy a Derby favourite for £7,500, and win with it, seems almost incredible in these days. For a time Sir James Miller's horses were trained by Gurry, who won the Oaks for him with La Sagesse. A still more important purchase was Roquebrune, as a yearling, for 4,100 guineas. It was found impossible to train the filly, but it was thanks to this purchase that a greater than Sainfoin arose in Rock Sand, who not only won the "triple crown," but is numbered amongst the great winners of the Turf, alongside Isinglass, Donovan and Flying Fox. During his comparatively short career on the Turf, Sir James Miller won nearly all its great prizes, as, in addition to the great victories of Sainfoin, Rock Sand and La Sagesse, a large sum of money was won over Chaleureux in the Cesarewitch, and Aida scored well in the One Thousand. It was a rash thing for "Mr. Teddy" to dead-heat with the owner of such luck.

When Sir James was adjutant of the 14th Hussars, and the regiment was quartered at Brighton, the men, in consequence of his being rather a "harbitrary gent" nicknamed him "Bloodstained Bill." This, being alluded to at mess, amused the Colonel—a very tall, thin man—immensely, and he chaffed his adjutant roundly.

Sir James gave his servant a sovereign to find out his Colonel's nickname, and heard that it was "Knuckle of Pork." Next evening, at mess, he disclosed his little piece of information. The Colonel was rather taken aback.

"Why on earth do they call me that?" he asked.

"I suppose, sir," said Sir James gently, "because there's so little meat on you."

The magnitude of Sir James Miller's victories on the Turf may be gauged by the fact that the year before Sainfoin's victory his winnings were scheduled at £102, but at the next reckoning they were £5,351 15s., and a somewhat caustic writer, reviewing the fact, inquired to which charity the baronet intended to send the fifteen shillings.

VIII

BETTING AND LAW

Heavy Bets— Lord Chaplin's Derby—The Biggest Derby Bet—Fry and the Stranger—Settling Days—Charlie Head and Sir Robert Peel—The Duke of Hamilton—Padwick—William Burch, " Silverhair "—The Hastings Correspondence—The Marquis's Losses—The Generosity of Lord Chaplin—Lord Hastings and the Quorn—Sir Frederick Johnstone—Sir George Chetwynd—The Durham Libel—The Gimcrack Dinner—The Licensed Victuallers Gazette—Bingham Cox—Charles Wood—The Judge's Ignorance—The " Pulling " Accusation—A Good Witness—Wood in the Box—Sir Henry James and Lord Durham—Lord Brampton—" Are You a Jockey? "—Pink Fivers—Lord Brampton's Thoroughbred—The Salisbury Baby—The Black Cap—The Derby Adjournment—The Young Magistrate—Corlett's " Safe Seat "—The Conscientious Witness—Jimmy Davis and Skilly—The Walsall Dynamiters—Police Surveillance—The Hawke Case—" A Place "—The Frivolous *Times*—The Dignity of the Ermine—J. G. Witt, K.C.—Shifter and Judicial Ignorance—Witt and Charles Russell.

WHEN one hears rumours of heavy betting it is as well, in order to get some standard of comparison, to take into account some of the heavy bets of the past. Figures talk.

The most money won on the Derby was by Mr. Naylor, who took £100,000 out of the Ring in Macaroni's year. The *Times* the day after Thormanby's Derby credited Mr. Merry with £100,000, but the win did not exceed £60,000. Mr. Jaques and Captain Bastard stood to win nearly a quarter of a million with Merlin. " Buster " Carew backed a horse called Old Robert to win him £180,000, and Swindell's commission for Wallace, whom he bought out of a selling race for less than £100, was £150,000, every shilling of which he declared he ought to have won.

Nominally no man ever won so much money on the Derby as the late Lord Chaplin, but it was not hard cash with him as it was with Mr. Naylor.

Perhaps the most curious bet ever laid on the race was £10,000 to a suit of clothes, a walking stick and a new hat, laid to Mr. Drinkald, whose horse Black Tommy ran second to Blink Bonny, many thinking he had won.

The biggest bet ever laid on the Derby was £100,000 to £1,000

against Vandermeulen in 1856, the layer being Davies, the taker D'Orsay Clark, who owned the horse, which started at 12 to 1 and ran well. Davies actually paid out £90,000 over two bets he laid against Daniel O'Rourke for the Derby of 1852.

And some people declare that betting is on the increase.

One of the largest bets ever laid by the late R. H. Fry was to a stranger who, a fortnight before the St. Leger, came to him and asked the price of the favourite.

"2 to 1," replied Fry.

"How much will you bet it to?"

Fry stared: "To more than you'll want," he replied with a smile.

"I'll take it to £10,000," and the man produced £10,000 in notes.

Fry did not see the backer again until after the race, when, the favourite having won, he came to the rails and demanded £30,000.

Bookmakers, however big, do not as a rule carry £30,000 about with them in ready money, and the backer was content to take an open cheque on a London bank. He must have left Doncaster at once, for he was on the doorstep at Lombard Street at nine the next morning, when he converted the cheque into notes. Fry told me he never saw the man again, and he believed it was the only bet he ever had in his life. Being curious on the subject, the great bookmaker had some private enquiries made, and ascertained that his strange client was a solicitor—or an accountant, I forget which— who, he guessed, had to make up some deficiency in trust money. A sound favourite for the St. Leger offered him a chance of escape and he took it.

I hasten to add that there is no moral to this story.

Settling on one day's racing before the next began has been for generations a thing of the past, but in its way it was wholesome, and the methods of the old school often prevented a man from sinking further into the mire. Probably the last big bet settled the day after the race was when Jackson paid Lord Vincent £11,000 over a bet of 11,000 to 1,000 that he had laid against Lord Clifden for the St. Leger.

Going to the other extreme, it for a time became a practice with many not to settle over the Sussex fortnight—Goodwood, Brighton and Lewes—until after the second week. Naturally, a lot of wild gambling resulted, and the plungers who tried to

"get it back" on the Saturday at Lewes were anxiously scanned by the Ring.

"I knew he wouldn't settle," observed Charlie Head of one of them; "he took any odds I offered him!"

It was Charlie Head who said of the plungers, after they had been having a bad time of it: "I hope to goodness they win a bit to-morrow, or on Monday they wont even try to settle!"

Sir Robert Peel once owed the redoubtable Charles a big sum, and on the Monday sent him a hamper of game. Head's reply ran: "Dear Sir Robert, Your game is high; my funds are low. Please remit."

And it was after a Sussex fortnight that a certain bright youth attempted to solve his financial problems by walking to the end of Brighton Pier and chucking his betting-book into the sea, with the remark: "There! I can't settle now if I wanted to, as I don't know what bets I've taken!"

The Ring, and in particular, Charlie Head, conscientiously tried to help him out of his little difficulty, but failed, and the the account is unsettled to this day.

But possibly Nemesis thought it time to interfere, for the following week the young gentleman who threw his book to the fishes was sent to gaol for driving a pair of horses in a way that attracted the unfavourable attention of the R.S.P.C.A., cruelty to animals being a far more serious affair than cruelty to bookmakers.

In a member of the old school the nonsense talked of the big betting nowadays must provoke a smile. More people bet, possibly—there are more people in the world, though whether that is wholly desirable or pleasant is another matter—but there is practically no big betting in the sense that big betting was understood in the "dull" Victorian days.

It has been said,— and never denied,— that the Duke of Hamilton laid £180,000 to £6,000 against Hermit, but the bet was called off before the race. Viscount Chaplin was reported to have won in all some £150,000 over the horse,—and he died only yesterday.

Lennard and I were once talking on the subject of big bets, I trying my hardest to persuade him to write a book on the whole subject as he knew it. He became reminiscent.

"I can see the Duke of Hamilton now," he mused, "walking up to Saffery on the day his horse Jannock won the big hurdle race at Auteuil. 'What price mine?' he asked.

" ' Seven to one, your Grace,' replied the dapper little penciller.

" ' Seven thousand to one, Saffery—pounds, not francs.'

" ' Right, your Grace ! '

" ' Twice, Saffery.'

" ' Right, your Grace ! '

" ' Three times, Saffery.'

" ' I'll make it 6 to 1 this time, your Grace. Shall we make it £20,000 to £8,000 ? '

" ' Right, Saffery ! ' "

A nice little bet to start a book on—and the horse won.

A prominent figure in the sporting world in the 'eighties was " Angus," Duke of Hamilton, who, however, spent more time on the Continent and on his yacht " Thistle "—afterwards to become the property of the Empress Eugenie—than in England.

The Duke was then about forty years of age, and an eccentric personality, to put it mildly. He dressed, frankly, like a howling cad, and the glaring colours of his costumes emphasised the crudeness of his bright red, curly hair. His nickname was " The Butcher "—due to his fondness for butcher blue shirts and ties. In addition, he wore conspicuous coral studs, a loud shawl-pattern suit, a brown billycock hat and coloured spats. When it is added that he stood about six feet in height and was broad in proportion,—later he became prodigiously fat,—you may gather that it was a conspicuous personality.

Of " Angus's " doings at Oxford, wild tales were told. He drove high dog-carts, eccentric tandems, made bull-dogs fashionable, and his exploits were a source of admiration and emulation to the " sporting set " among the undergraduates of his day. He was Earl of Angus when his father broke his neck by falling downstairs at a continental hotel, and, when he succeeded to the property, being deeply in debt and not wanting to be bothered with business, he placed the management of his affairs in the hands of the notorious Padwick, the money-lender who figured conspicuously in the Hastings drama, who let him have what money he liked. With the money he bought racehorses and ran them in England and on the Continent. As his income was supposed to be about £500 a day he had plenty of spending money, and, unlike poor Hastings, he extricated himself from Padwick's clutches, forcing the usurer to make up deficiencies under an " action of accounting," in the course of which proceedings Padwick died.

The Scotch blood in " Angus " made him more than a match for even a moneylender.

But, premier peer of Scotland though he was, the Duke looked —as he had every right to look, for his mother was a German—a typical German.

Hamilton Palace, now in course of demolition, was a hideous and quite modern erection, surrounded by coal pits and a smell of whisky. The Duke gave a big ball there in 1876, at which King Edward and the Prince Imperial of France were among the guests, and shortly after sold most of the furniture, and the famous Beckford library, and never returned to Hamilton. Brodick Castle, in the beautiful Island of Arran, was made his principal Scottish home, and in his later years the Duke lived there a great deal, with the " Thistle " anchored under his windows in Brodick Bay.

I remember seeing him there more than once in his latter days—a mountain of a man, purple-faced, and in a suit of violent checks, half-lying in the stern-sheets of his yacht's launch, as she drifted idly along a few yards from the shore, the Duke apparently taking a lively interest in the fair bathers of Brodick Bay.

So far as Arran was concerned, lovers of natural beauties owe him much, for he steadily refused to increase his income by letting big villas be built on the island, thereby preserving it as an almost unique rural playground for the dwellers in the crowded cities of the West of Scotland.

As an associate of the Duke of Hamilton, the writer of the Paris letter in the early days of the paper, William Burch,— " Silverhair,"—was a notable figure in Parisian Turf circles thirty or forty years ago. At one time he was connected with the firm of Valentine & Wright, and adopted the pen-name of " In Vino Veritas."

The nom-de-plume was an apt one, for surely never was there a man who could drink more champagne, and seldom be the worse for it, except for a growing grandiloquence in speech as pint succeeded pint. Poor Barry Pain told me once in Simpson's, in justification of a modest half-bottle of wine, that " port induces a certain majesty of thought "; with " Silverhair," who when absolutely sober used to make astounding comparisons, such as declaring a steak to be " tender as a new pin," the fourth and fifth pint of champagne would evoke most wonderful malapropisms. " Strike while the anvil is hot," " Courage is

the better part of valour," "Save me from my foes!" and "On a stretcher of imagination" are a few that became classics in their day.

It was often said that Burch must have been born with a head of white hair, for no one ever remembered it being of any other colour. His beard also was white, but he retained almost to the end, in 1899, his smart and youthful appearance. This, combined with his white hair, made him a striking figure, and one evening on one of his visits to London, a bevy of festive ladies in Jimmy's—where he created a sensation—insisted that the handsome and venerable stranger was the angel Gabriel.

In Paris in those days the racing set used to meet at the Cosmopolitan in the rue Scribe, but later the more popular rendezvous was the Eureka, a little bar in the rue des Mathurins. where all drinks were a franc. Among the regular clients were Baron Lucien de Hirsch, the Hennessys, the Duke of Hamilton and "Silverhair," who was on particularly good terms with the Duke.

Immense fortunes must have been made in those days in the betting offices of Paris, where betting on English and French races was conducted in an open, even barefaced manner. Lists of prices were exhibited in the windows, and the French public, always ready to gamble on anything, would rush at the cramped odds on offer. Wright, who married a daughter of Johnny Gideon, blossomed out into one of the biggest bookmakers under the trees at Longchamps and Auteuil, and "Jack" Valentine (as everyone called him, though his christian name was George) also had a "pitch" lower down.

Valentine, with whom Burch was associated, was one of the founders of the continental firm of Valentine, Hardaway and Topping, which had its headquarters at Boulogne-sur-Mer. Fresh partners were introduced, and the title was changed to Topping and Spindler, and when banished from France by the anti-betting bill, the business was transferred to Flushing, and afterwards to Switzerland.

In Corlett's possession at one time was a mass of correspondence relating to the Hastings era, but many letters were in the writing of men then living, and people still living are concerned, so the letters are unpublishable. They make clear certain oft-disputed matters, and amongst other facts, make plain to a shilling the sum the Marquess lost on Hermit.

The amount actually paid was £104,750. The cheque sent to

the Victoria Club on settling day was for £59,000. In addition, the Marquess had paid directly to the late Duke of Newcastle £9,775, and to a well-known baronet £15,975. The amount lost to Mr. Chaplin was £20,000. Mr. Chaplin's letter to the Marquess, suggesting that the amount should be held over was couched in singularly delicate and kindly terms.

One point established by those letters is that the man most astonished over Hermit's win was the horse's owner.

Despite this generous behaviour Lord Hastings never missed an opportunity of annoying Mr. Chaplin by bidding over him for anything that came under the hammer, and it was at the sale of Her Majesty's yearlings at Hampton Court that, stung by the persistent insults, Mr. Chaplin determined to press his claim, arguing, quite rightly, that if his lordship could always afford to outbid him, he could afford to pay him.

The claim was made, and was instantly met.

For a time the Marquess of Hastings was Master of the Quorn and his want of punctuality scandalised the old school.

In the billiard-room of a country house in the Quorn country there was—and, maybe, still is—a sketch of the Marquess of Hastings standing still on his horse by Great Dalby Gorse, with Sir Frederick Johnstone saying to him:

"They're wrong, Harry! Blow your horn, for God's sake!"

"I can't; I should be sick if I did!"

And underneath were the verses:

Who Can Tell?

When will the Marquess come?
Who can tell?
Half-past twelve or half-past one?
Who can tell?
Driving at an awful rate
As if afraid that he is late,
What cares he how long we wait?
Who can tell? Who can tell?

Shall we have to wait again?
Who can tell?
In the wind and in the rain?
Who can tell?
While the Marquess, snug and warm,
In the hall where toadies swarm

Leaves us to the pelting storm?
Who can tell? Who can tell?

Where will he draw, by way of lark?
Who can tell?
Gartree Hill or Bradgate Park?
Who can tell?
Sport regarding as a jest,
North or south, or east or west,
Which will suit his fancy best?
Who can tell? Who can tell?

Where, oh where is Tailby's horn?
Who can tell?
Why came I with this cussed Quorn?
Who can tell?
Marquess, this is not a race,
Can you look us in the face
And say you really like the chase?
Who can tell? Who can tell?

It is, of course, even to this day, common belief that the Marquess of Hastings was ruined by his losses at racing, but turfites of the old school argue in the opposite direction, and even assert that he was actually a winner on the turf.

An amusing and eminently characteristic story used to be told of Viscount Chaplin, whilst travelling with Sir Frederick Johnstone in India. They arrived at a small railway station just in time to see the only train of the day steam out.

"When does the next go?" asked the then Mr. Chaplin of the half-caste station-master.

"Sir," replied the latter, "we have not here frequently trains. There is no next."

"Then order a special at once," said the other, imperiously.

The chee-chee's hair stood on end.

"Are you aware, mister, that a special train will cost you between one hundred and fifty and two hundred rupees?"

And after the millionaire had produced the money, the station-master wired frantically to Calcutta that he had got on his premises either the Czar of All the Russias, or an escaped lunatic (British).

It was Sir Frederick Johnstone who, after the Chetwynd v.

Durham case—which made Turf history in its time—had a little passage of arms of his own with Lord Durham.

One day, at Sandown Park, Sir George was in the Jockey Club stand, and Lord Durham asked Sir Frederick what right he had to be there.

"If you mean that you want me to turn George Chetwynd out of this stand I'll see you damned first!" was Sir Frederick's reply. Being a member of the National Hunt Committee Sir George had a perfect right in the stand.

Sir George Chetwynd, who had lived a life with more sensations in it than fall to the lot of most adventurous men, became towards the end of it rather a creature of habit. He was still very faithful to the race-course and knew everybody in the world of sport. The Turf and the Beefsteak were the two Clubs he was most likely to be found at,—he generally dined at the Beefsteak, the chair at the head of the table being usually left vacant for him. In the winter, a weak chest was the excuse for Monte Carlo, where he gambled a little, raced a little, and sauntered through life very pleasantly, for he knew all the celebrities of the principality.

From the start of *Town Topics*, in which Newnham-Davis, Pitcher, Horace Lennard and myself were concerned after the break with the old "Pink 'Un," he was one of the most regular readers, and a little while before his death in 1917 he wrote us from Monte Carlo that he had not missed a number from the first issue.

It was on a Saturday afternoon at Alexandra Park when he received the news of the Arbitrators' award in his action against Lord Durham. It was a hot day, but he looked delightfully cool in his suit of flannels and a straw hat with a coloured band. Someone handed him a telegram.

"One farthing damages," was the message.

He read it, and smiled faintly.

"Rather short odds," he said quietly, as he handed it to Lennard.

It must have been a terrific blow to him, for he had been grossly libelled and grievously wronged. He fully expected the verdict with substantial damages, but he did not whine or find fault with the judges. He had always taken Fortune's rewards and buffets with equal calm, and no one who watched him for the rest of that afternoon would have imagined that he had experienced the greatest blow of his life.

From what was written at the time of his death about the Chetwynd v. Durham case it is plain that few race-goers of the present day have a clear idea of what actually took place.

Lennard, who was then editing *The Man of the World*, was in court every day; Tatlock, the portly barrister, having taken him under his wing to explain racing terms. Counsel appeared without wig or gown, and amongst the juniors on the plaintiff's side was a young man named Rufus Isaacs.

Few people to-day know the precise nature of the charges made by Lord Durham, and I have seen it stated in print that at the Gimcrack Club dinner he had accused Sir George of not running his horses straight and of having connived at malpractices on the part of his jockey.

The whole trouble began with an issue in the previous November of *The Licensed Victuallers' Gazette*, in which it was asked:

"How about the running of Success at Lewes and Alexandra Park, when Charley Wood nearly pulled his head off on each occasion?"

Such a paragraph could not go unchallenged, and Wood brought an action for libel against that quaint character Bingham Cox, the proprietor of the paper. The verdict was in his favour, with damages of one farthing.

In the Gimcrack speech no names were mentioned, but it was clear to everyone that Sir George Chetwynd and Wood, his jockey, were the owner and jockey attacked, and Sir George issued a writ for libel, claiming £20,000 damages. He was then one of the most prominent figures on the Turf and had been a Steward of the Jockey Club.

In the Wood v. Cox case the judge had made a parade of his ignorance of racing, and it being suggested that an arbitration before experts would be more likely to arrive at the truth, the three Stewards of the Jockey Club consented to act.

In his particulars of justification Lord Durham admitted that "the well-known racing stable" referred to in his speech was "the stable occupying premises at Chetwynd House, Newmarket, where racehorses were trained by R. Sherrard, and in which racehorses belonging to and running in the name of Lord Lurgan, Sir George Arthur, Mr. H. Hungerford, Mr. E. B. Barnard, Mr. E. Benzon, General Owen Williams and Sir George Chetwynd were trained."

He also admitted that the jockey referred to as suspected or

known to be guilty of pulling horses was Charles Wood, who was employed by Sir George "because he thought the said Charles Wood was a jockey who could square other jockeys."

There was a long list of other accusations, one of them being that throughout the racing season 1887 fourteen horses named (including Fullerton) were conspicuous for their constant in-and-out running, and were not fairly ridden to win races in which they ran.

It was also declared that the plaintiff on every occasion when the said horses ran won large sums of money when they were successful, but lost very small sums of money—or no money at all—when they were beaten.

All these charges were proved to be false.

Before the case came into court, Sir George had submitted to the Stewards of the Jockey Club his betting book, and supplied them with other evidence to show that he had lost £1099 over Fullerton's running during the year. In the box he was a good witness, answering every question clearly, replying first, and explaining afterwards, when he thought any explanation necessary. During a long and searching cross-examination, he was never at a loss to account for his actions, and he disposed of one allegation after another. Writing at the time, Lennard said:

"I wonder how many men of business in the City of London would have passed through such an ordeal as Sir George Chetwynd has done with so much credit. I do not think there are many who would care to have every action of their career, and every document connected therewith, brought into the fierce light that beats upon the witness-box during a cross-examination by Sir Charles Russell."

Charley Wood also came well out of the trial, so far as his character for honesty and straight riding was concerned, but it was proved that he had transgressed against the Rules of the Jockey Club by betting and owning horses, two things which, one is carefully assured, are unknown to the present race of riders. It was for these offences that he was punished, and not for "pulling" or "squaring." Wood had to run the course twice, having been severely cross-examined during his own action against Cox, but he made no slips in his evidence.

He had an easy, offhand way of answering Sir Charles Russell's conundrums which rather annoyed the great man.

His favourite formula was:

"Well, supposin' you was to come to me, and' ask me to lend you a hundred or two, I shouldn't ask you what you wanted it for, but just give you a cheque."

Lord James of Hereford, then Sir Henry James, represented Sir George at the arbitration.

Lord Durham, who had the advantage of Sir Charles Russell's advocacy and knowledge of the Turf, remarked with questionable taste to Sir Henry:

"You don't appear to know much about racing."

Which drew the retort:

"I hope I shall never know so much as your Lordship."

"Jacko" was sorry he spoke.

The greatest sin Sir George committed was to make money at racing, and he was not ashamed to admit it. A man who wins large sums on the Turf is put down as a "sharp," while the one who loses is regarded as a "mug." But I see no reason why a man should not make money by breeding, racing or backing horses, if his inclination and his judgment lie in that direction. Sir George Chetwynd made an intelligent study of the racing business, and profited by the knowledge he acquired.

His public conduct stood the test of the severest possible cross-examination by a master of this difficult art, and nothing but good was spoken of him by those who knew him privately. The greatest mistake he made was when, after the trial, he sent in his resignation to the Jockey Club, under the belief that Lord Durham, against whom the verdict had gone, would do the same.

By the death of Lord Brampton the "Pink 'Un" lost one of its oldest subscribers and firmest supporters, and Corlett one of his most loyal friends. There must be some still alive who remember the sketch of Master in the witness-box, with the inscription "Are you a jockey?" It was drawn by Sir Frank Lockwood during the Wood case for the then Mr. Justice Hawkins.

A story Corlett was fond of was of the usher who cried "Silence in court!" every time someone sitting below the judge's seat rustled a paper he was reading. Hawkins leaned over to see what was causing the noise, and observing that it was a pink paper published that morning, sent down word that he would like to have the loan of it during the luncheon interval.

John delighted to tell that story to the paper-makers, and always added:

"Begad, sir, you don't make paper like that nowadays: let's hear it rustle more; rustle and crinkle like a banknote. Then all our readers can have the sensation of handling pink fivers!"

Lord Brampton's friendship for John Corlett was a very real one, and his love of racing was the subject of many stories, kind and unkind.

Lord Brampton never owned racehorses, but it is on record that a thoroughbred, Dreadnought, which he rode as a hack until the animal came down on Richmond Hill and cut his knees to pieces, afterwards won a race. And the judge used to tell with grim humour that the race was a ramp, the three horses which ran in it all belonging to the same owner.

There was only one serious attempt to come between the judge and his love of racing, and that was in 1891, when Mr. Cobb asked in the House of Commons whether the nine days which the then Sir Henry Hawkins devoted to the assizes at Bury-St-Edmunds did not coincide curiously with the racing at Newmarket, and was duly snubbed by the then Home Secretary.

And many may remember that he twice postponed the further hearing of the notorious Salisbury Baby Claimant case; the first time for some testing of the infant's hair being the same colour as the reputed male parent's moustache, and the second for expert evidence upon the custom of giving a newly-born child a piece of sugar smothered in butter to relieve flatulency. Still, as he assured counsel one Epsom Tuesday, after a question in the House as to the validity of closing any particular court on Derby Day: "I have never yet done a thing which I felt I had not the full power to do."

That Lord Brampton did not seriously resent the crude witticisms of "the hanging judge" variety was evidenced on at least one occasion.

It was in the weighing-room of one of the principal courses, and a large number of light-weight jockeys and apprentices were passing the scales to ride in some nursery. A certain owner was running two horses, and the jockey of each had donned first colours.

"This won't do; we must have a distinction," said the clerk of the scales; "one of you had better get a black cap."

"We've tried to, sir, but can't get one," said one of the lads.

"Oh, rubbish," cried the official petulantly, "surely *somebody* here can lend you a black cap!"

And as his glance went round the room, he became aware of the cold, steely, grey-eyed glance of Hawkins, who, raising his right hand, shook his forefinger in grim warning, and strolled away.

"My God!" muttered the official, crimson as beetroot, "could he possibly have had the thing in his pocket?"

Lord Brampton was quite candid in talking about the way in which he managed to get his Court adjourned in time to see the Derby.

He would arrange for three or four short cases to appear on the list before a long one. The first he would quickly dispose of, and the others he would contrive to upset. He would then call for the next case, and there would be no one in court, solicitors or counsel, ready for it. Then came the judicial protest.

"Here I am, wasting my time waiting to hear cases, and none are ready, and yet people complain that there are not enough judges!"

The Court then rose, and in a few minutes the judge was on his way to Epsom.

It was in the Birdcage at Newmarket that old John Corlett was introduced to him by the late Duke of Beaufort, and from that time the two very decided characters became on terms of considerable intimacy, an intimacy which lasted until extreme old age rendered writing irksome to the venerable judge. But on Corlett's being appointed as a magistrate for the county of Kent, one of the first letters of congratulation was from Lord Brampton, and in it the old judge impressed on the "young" magistrate the importance of never refusing bail when a bailable offence had been committed.

Old John took his magistracy with proper seriousness, but could never be induced to entertain Parliamentary aspirations, though on at least one occasion a determined attempt was made to get him to stand for a certain division. A seat was placed at his disposal under curious conditions. The constituency was a sea-side place where he was pretty well-known and where bribery was rampant. Win or lose, a contest cost a candidate from ten to twenty thousand, and, one day before the election, a great friend of Corlett's, who was one of the political wire-pullers, came to him.

"D'you want to stand for Parliament, John?" he asked.

"No, it's not in my way," grunted the old man. "Why?"

"Well," was the reply, "you can if you like, and I'll see that you get the seat."

"But how?"

The scheme was then unfolded.

"You must stand as an independent candidate," said the expert, "and be careful not to spend a ha'penny beyond the allowance for costs, and you needn't even spend that. Your friends will vote for you, and you may get a few others, mostly 'cranks.' When the poll is declared, you'll find yourself at the bottom, and then,—come to me. I'll be able to bring you, in shoals, cases of bribery, as I know where they all are on both sides. You'll lodge a petition and claim the seat, as you wont have bribed anyone, while the other four candidates, Liberal and Conservative, will be up to their necks in it."

The scheme was ingenious, but the old man declined and watched the progress of the election with fresh interest. Bribery, as the expert had predicted, was unblushing, and eventually a Royal Commission was appointed, which resulted in the unseating of the successful candidate, the disfranchisement of the constituency, and the committing of several enthusiasts to gaol, the candidates themselves narrowly escaping.

One of the witnesses stated that he had received twenty-five pounds to vote Conservative, and, in cross-examination, it was elicited that he had also received twenty-five pounds to vote Liberal.

Mr. Justice Matthew, in amazement, repeated:

"You say you received twenty-five pounds to vote Conservative?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"And you also received twenty-five pounds to vote Liberal?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"And for whom did you vote at the finish?" asked the astonished Judge, throwing himself back in the chair.

And then that witness, with injured dignity in every line of his face, answered with great earnestness:

"I voted, my Lord, according to my conscience!"

The judge said, in telling the story afterwards, that he was never nearer falling off the bench in his life.

That was the nearest the Master of the "Pink 'Un" ever got to being a Member of Parliament.

For long John Corlett was in the habit of meeting Lord Brampton outside the Jockey Club rooms at Newmarket, and going with him to the course, returning together after the last race, and during those walks the judge told many stories, which afterwards appeared in his book or in the pages of Corlett's paper.

After he had passed sentence on "Jimmy" Davis for the libel on Robert Peck, Corlett attempted in one of their walks to intercede with him so as to have the brilliant little culprit made a first-class misdemeanant.

Old John pointed out how hard it was to sentence a man who had just won "Labby's" prize in *Truth* for the best menu for a first-class dinner to live for a time on "skilly." Hawkins laughed, and said that the application must be made to the Home Secretary, and if it was referred to him he would support it.

Even his worst enemies had to admit that Hawkins was fearless of consequences.

It was generally understood that after the Phoenix Park assassinations and the subsequent assassination of one of the witnesses, some difficulty would be found in getting a judge to try the Walsall dynamiters, the Fenians having openly threatened to murder any judge who passed sentence on them.

This brought Hawkins to the seat of judgment, and Corlett was fond of telling an experience in connection with the case.

He was returning one night from Newmarket and had to change at Cambridge for the London train. The officials, of course, knew him, and he was mildly surprised at the pertinacity of an inspector, who seemed desperately anxious that he should ride in a particular carriage, the only other occupant of which was an old gentleman. Approaching the carriage, Corlett saw someone with his back to the door, apparently fumbling with an overcoat.

"This is a gentleman I know very well, sir," said the inspector, opening the door, "it will be quite all right."

The old gentleman turned round, and Corlett saw it was Hawkins. He smiled, and held out his hand.

"Well, I'm glad it is you," he said, and explained that in view of the threats on his life, the police and railway officials made sure of his fellow passengers.

Arrived at Liverpool Street, the pair drove away together in a hansom, setting Corlett down at Cannon Street Station, the judge continuing his journey to Park Lane.

"Now," said Corlett before alighting, "a fine line for the morning papers might be got out of this: all I have to do is to stick a knife into you, and then alight, and tell the cabman to drive on to Park Lane, leaving no trace of a second man."

"It's too grim a subject even to contemplate," said Brampton sourly.

That the threats made against him were not empty ones was evidenced by the fact that an attempt was made to blow up his house, but the blunderers made a mistake in the number, and damaged the house next door, which was in the occupation of Lord Esher, and the first person to call on Lady Esher to sympathise with her was Mr. Justice Hawkins.

A very curious idea arose that, because Mr. Justice Hawkins was so fond of racing, with a betting case brought before him it would be odds on the defendant. When the famous Hurst Park appeal came before him, a certain paper expressed its gratification that he was to be the judge, as he would make short work of Mr. John Hawke and his irritating prosecution. The writer would not have expressed himself in such a manner could he only have heard a conversation Corlett had with the judge at Newmarket on that very subject.

"I am sick of these nice distinctions," he said, "and finding that an umbrella is a 'place,' and a walking-stick is not, is contemptible. This is a 'place'," pointing to the Birdcage, "and that is a 'place,' and so I should hold it." And he did.

And Corlett was loyal to the memory of his old friend.

On Lord Brampton's death, the *Times* regretted his habit of judicial joking, and John took up his pen in defence.

"The *Times*," he wrote, "is in the habit of printing day by day, extracts from the *Times* of the same day a hundred years ago. One of these extracts, which we have just seen, is full of rollicking fun, with puns 'three to a pint,' and generally is as harum-scarum as the most frivolous could wish for. If the *Times* of to-day were to print a joke, the staff would probably have a fit, and we are sure the editor would. Lord Brampton's habit of joking is regarded by the *Times* with great disfavour, and as having been the blot on a great career. The only joke the *Times* of to-day has made is the 'Encyclopædia Britannica.' That, however, is not much of a joke."

But in spite of his affection and respect for the old judge, Corlett, who had a fine sense of the judicial dignity, would tell with reprobation one story in which the judge's inseparable companion, his fox-terrier Jack, figured, greatly to the detriment of the dignity of the ermine.

At Maidstone on one occasion, when the High Sheriff attended to meet the judge at the railway station, the great man insisted on walking, and an extraordinary procession was formed, the judge leading his terrier on a bit of string. Every now and then the procession halted—Judge, High Sheriff, Deputy Sheriff, Judge's Marshall, Javelin men, all—in order to enable the dog to gratify an apparently insatiable curiosity as to the make and shape of various lamp-posts.

Another of the legal luminaries who found neither sport nor sporting journalism beneath his notice was Mr. J. G. Witt, K.C., whose death occurred with awful suddenness whilst travelling to the Law Courts in a Strand omnibus.

Witt was the life and soul of the Bar Point-to-Point meetings, an able lawyer, and the most genial of mankind, and his name became him well. Many were the little jokes from his pen that appeared in the roseate pages of Corlett's journal.

Witt's reminiscences of bygone magnates were interesting, and he had always a great contempt for the junior, who, in order to ingratiate himself with the judges, professes ignorance of subjects which are not regarded with patience by some of them.

"A common lawyer," he would declare, "ought to make himself acquainted with all the follies of the people, as well as their virtues and vices."

And he would instance an experience of poor little Shifter.

Shifter was in one of the courts when a racing case was being heard, in which a fellow Oxford man, who later became a very big wig indeed, was junior. The judge was impatient and almost insulting at the time of the court being wasted, as he put it, over a racing case. Apologetically, the junior said:

"Really, m'Lord, I know as little of these matters as your Lordship, but I have been instructed, etc., etc. . . ."

After the case, Shifter seized him, and said:

"What an ass you were to say what you did! What were you doing there if you didn't know? You were paid to know! Do you think Charlie Russell would have said he didn't know? Not he! When the judge gave himself away, as he did, by

saying he knew nothing about the matter, Russell would have jumped in and said, ' My Lord, I know *all* about it, and I shall be happy to place my knowledge at the disposal of your Lordship and that of the gentlemen of the jury,' and from that moment he'd have bossed the case! The other side wouldn't have had a look in! "

That junior, who before many years became a famous K.C., never again told judges he was ignorant of the subject on which he was addressing them.

Witt always looked upon Russell of Killowen as having been the greatest man of his time at the Bar, and the admiration was reciprocated.

" How I envy you your Dutch phlegmatic disposition! " said Lord Russell once to Witt, and there was something pathetic in the lament, for the latter always vowed that the vehemence and impetuosity of Russell hastened his end.

IX

THE "RING" AND THE "BOOK"

Changes in Betting—Dick Dunn—A Shouting Likeness—The Archdeacon and the "Fielder"—Hurst Park—A Waste of Outsiders—Dick's Methods—The Mad Punter—The Retort Courteous—Royal Ascot—The Interrupted Burglar—A Useful Crowd—Dick Dunn's "Pitchmy"—Bill Lakey's Philosophy—A Reasonable Condition—Mrs. Langtry's Handicap—Sympathy for the Archbishop—A "Lord of Language"—The Noble Army of "Earbiters"—Punctilio—"Admiral" Lyons—The Polite Letter-writer—Female Cheap Labour—The Box o' Tricks—A Tea-shop Sensation—Hot 'Uns—Shifter Rubs It In—Considerate Bookmakers—The Camp-followers' Economics—King Edward and the Misfits—A Change of Address—An Ambiguous Welcome—The Chief Constable's Tact.

A FAT volume might be written on the changes in betting, both from a business and a personal point of view, since Mr. Richard Dunn settled his last account in 1905.

Dick Dunn lived to see the end of his school of ready-money fielders who, at one time, could hardly take their money fast enough, and towards the close of his career would admit, with his usual cheery wealth of language, that a one-hundred-pound book was about the limit at ordinary meetings.

A rough diamond—a very rough diamond indeed, should occasion arise—Dunn was a brilliant operator, thoroughly skilled in his business, and understood to the full the gentle art of publicity. But a kinder, more generous-hearted soul never breathed, and to many, who never dealt with him as a fielder, his name was associated only with his never-ceasing labour in the cause of charity. And what that labour must have cost him was known to him alone, for it was his invariable habit to head the list of any charitable subscription in which he was interested. Nor did that end his generosity. "I subscribed to your fund: you must subscribe to mine," is the inevitable request made of the charity organiser, and Dunn organised innumerable charity funds.

As for the man himself, Gubbins once drew a pen-portrait of him which was a speaking—nay, shouting is the more appro-

priate word when one remembers Dick's stentorian roar—likeness of the man.

"Years ago," wrote Gub, "he was dubbed the Lord Chesterfield, but a better name would be the Talleyrand, of the Ring. A list of his smart sayings would choke up the British Museum, and I never saw him nonplussed but once, and that was when a railway guard wanted two points over the odds. Well do I remember the first wager I had with Dick. 'Take care of your ticket, sir,' he chaunted in his most dulcet tones, 'or some evil-doer will relieve you of it.' The last time the chaunt was in the minor key. 'Here! Take your bloomin' custom somewhere else: I'm tired of payin' you!' He who saw D. D. in the Ring for the first time would probably marvel at the beauty and sparkle of his diamonds. Next he would admire the neat attire of the bookmaker and of 'Sobersides,' his clerk. But what would most strike the observer is the *voice* of the man. Whatever Dick in former days was, a parish clerk, a vicar choral or a vendor of Coventry watches, I know not, but certain it is that his voice is the most powerful as well as the most tuneful I ever heard. And then, the reckless daring of the man! When the history of Dick Dunn comes to be written, it will be told how he defied the Stewards of the Jockey Club on their native heath, played the noble game of spoof with one of Her Majesty's police—aye! and has even taken on the Shifter. And the thanks of the civilised world are due to him for doing his level best to break the Talepitcher's neck, by endeavouring to lure him out hunting on one of Dick's gee-gees. But it didn't come off—nor did the intended victim.

"Had the subject of my notice cared to enter the political arena, he would have been Prime Minister long before this. Had he been destined for the Army, he would have been a quartermaster in a year's time and would have retired on his, well, his savings. As it is, Dick probably makes the biggest ready-money book in the Ring, has one of the largest mansions in London, and the best tailor, and, moreover, pays him. He has a most genial disposition, and the readiest of wits. He has diamonds which would make a duchess turn pale with envy. He has a clerk who, for rapidity of writing and integrity of purpose, would put any denizen of Fleet Street to the blush. He has a fine stud of horses, and a bowing acquaintance with two-thirds of the inhabitants of the United Kingdom. He has an income

which far exceeds that of the Lord Chancellor. And the gout has him."

There were worse callings than that of a ready-money bookmaker in the 'eighties and 'nineties.

It was not Dunn, but another "fielder" of his era, who reaching three-score and having amassed a comfortable fortune, bought a fine estate in Surrey and settled down to enjoy it. Especially was he at pains—egged on by the social aspirations of his wife—to get on calling terms with the local nobility and gentry, and particularly with the neighbouring archdeacon. But the breed of him burst out one day—and all was over. The archdeacon had called and was extolling the natural beauties of the estate, and, observed he, mellifluously:

"Often and often, Mr. Barwun, in the early hours of the morning, I fear I am a trespasser on your lands, but nothing so delights me as the walk round your beautiful place, from one boundary to another."

"Love-a-duck!" exclaimed the emigrant from Tattersall's with a sudden inspiration. "Then I'll take a slight shade of odds as *you're* the beggar as goes round, afore anybody's about, chalkin' up ——! on my palin's!"

Clustered round Dick Dunn at the Hurst Park he loved were his "little Saturday afternoon plungers"; the butchers and bakers and candlestick makers who come racing only one afternoon a week.

"Six to four the field! Six to four the field!"

A sportsman, whose greasy box-coat covered, but did not conceal, the single-breasted blue flannel frock of the meat salesman, handed over his pound.

"Give me one pound of the fav'rite, Dick?"

"Right you are—one-pound-eight-ounces to one pound, Smithfield!"

And how Dick Dunn loved Hurst Park.

When, towards the end, a pal met him on the staircase at Oddenino's, and expressed his pain at seeing him look so ill;—

"No, not gout this time," poor Dick blurted, "but ev'ry other (adjective) thing in the doctor's stock-book, and to such an extent that I prayed—positively prayed—for the gout to come an' drive the other devils away. Should have gone abroad—warmth—sunshine—flowers—birds—but too (another adjective) ill to move. Well, so long; see you at Hurst Park . . ."

"What, if you're too ill to move?"

"Oh yes, *ordinarily*. But when they goes an' brings it outside your (something) front door, how the —— *can* you keep out of it?"

But Dick's language was always well-flavoured to taste—his own taste, and few who heard it can forget his piercing wail one Sandown Meeting, when the judge placed *three* outsiders in the Great Sapling Stakes.

"Well! Well!! Well!!!" he fairly howled. "What a —— waste of outsiders!"

And once at Kempton he almost paralysed a noble owner whose horse, starting at 33 to 1 in a field of three, ran the odds on favourite to a short head.

"God bless you, my lord! God bless you!" bawled Dick. "If you'd on'y ha' won I'd—I'd—dammy, I'd ha' kissed you on *both* cheeks!"

And the peer became resigned to defeat.

When things were slack, and punters shy, Dick Dunn had his own methods of obtaining custom.

It was, for example, on a bygone Youm Kippur, when the Day of Atonement fell on the Wednesday in the Newmarket First October instead of on the Monday afterwards, that Dunn gazed all over Tattersall's, trying to spot a Hebraic proboscis. Finally, he shouted:

"Here! A present of a dollar—a ready dollar to any Jew that has a bet with me!"

And a curious looking chap with large, sleepy eyes and crinkly jet-black hair—but an unmistakable pug-nose—stepped up.

"D'you mean what you say?" he asked.

"Of course I do!" roared Dunn.

"Then I'll take you two dollars the fav'rite, an'—you can hold your own dollar," sniggered the punter, holding out his hand for the ticket.

"D'you swear you're a Jew?" asked Dunn, nonplussed for the moment, his eyes on the absurd nose.

"Me mother was; me father wasn't," admitted the hybrid.

"Oh—then hand my clerk two-an'-a-tanner; you're only *half* a (something) Jew!" chimed Dick, and the crowd roared its applause, as usual.

Glorious Goodwood calls to mind the story of a Dick Dunn double at the ducal meeting.

The redoubtable Richard had laid fifties on a combination in the second and third races to a frantic punter who was pro-

bably a bank manager on the verge of absconding. The first horse won, and the white-faced backer rushed up with the news.

"It's won—it's won!" he panted breathlessly, and flopped in a dead faint. The fielder and his clerk stared grimly at the prostrate form, and then the latter spoke.

"Shall I fetch him some brandy, guv'nor?''

"Let the perisher be," commanded Dick sternly; "an' go an' get a wreath!"

But Dick Dunn once had a really mad punter, who ran into thousands, first bringing off some unconscionable accumulator, and then "playing up" his capital. He used to make his appearance in Regent Street in the middle of the afternoon wearing a woman's hat and feathers, and Marechal Niel roses stitched up the sides of his trousers.

"Harmless?" echoed Dick, when asked the question concerning the poor creature. "No, anything but that; *he backs winners*!"

No racecourse story of the retort courteous is complete without a pendant from the Dick Dunn lode.

Full up against the favourite at 7 to 2, Dick promptly lowered to threes on the appearance of a bright young lad behind a monocle.

"But I've heard you shouting 7 to 2," objected the would-be investor.

"Threes now!" cried Dick.

"It was 7 to 2 not five seconds ago," persisted the lamb.

"Threes now!" reiterated Dick, with unusual calm, ignoring his puny foe.

But the lamb showed its teeth with sudden fury.

"You shout, and you bawl," he snarled, "and you blow your beastly trumpet, *and—you—wont—bet*! DAMN YOU!"

And for once, the lord of language stood tongue-tied!

But Dunn was rarely tongue-tied. Most emergencies found him ready—even eager—to rise to them.

In the course of his betting one day at the Hurst Park he loved, Dunn was pestered by a lardy-dardy youth who continually fought his way to the front, elbowing through the crowds of eager punters, merely to "price" horses, without doing any business. Time and again the same thing happened, until it came to the last race of the day. Up turned the youth, with his inevitable:

"What's on the field?"

Then did the modern Lord Chesterfield turn to him, and, gazing steadily in his face, reply comprehensively:

"Grass, you ——!"

It was at an Ascot meeting that Dick Dunn had a pleasant little shock.

There were only three horses running, and the chances of two of them seemed equally balanced. A young aristocrat betted Dunn £50 even on one of the three, and then, becoming alarmed, laid £50 even on the other. The third horse ran for the book with a vengeance.

And still they say that bookmakers never make a profit!

But Ascot is unique. All sorts and conditions of backers are to be seen in the Royal Enclosure, many of whom never attend any other meeting. Youngsters with plenty of money in their pockets for the first time, and with the wholly admirable sensation that they are entitled to buy the earth and all that is in it, come, and attempt to bet in a fashion that astonishes even the blasé bookmaker; others lay out their money in a more frugal fashion. I remember being at one Ascot with Lennard, who was brushed aside by an impetuous gentleman desperately eager to bet with Charles Hibbert.

"What price so-and-so?" demanded the impetuous one suspiciously, and the price was quoted.

"Nine to four," said Hibbert, regarding his man carefully, and obviously expecting nine hundred to four, or something even bigger.

To Hibbert's dumb astonishment, the gentleman placed two brand new florins in his hand and said:

"I will take nine shillings to four." Then, as a suspicious afterthought,—"I suppose you will be here after the race?"

A racecourse philosopher, if ever there was one, was Bill Lakey, an obscure member of Dick Dunn's entourage. Not to say a bit of a poet.

Returning from a Kentish meeting, as the train slid swiftly through the Garden of England, William was observed by his companions to be gazing through the windows of the carriage with a rapt expression entirely foreign to his nature.

"Wotcher thinkin' abaht, Bill?" demanded one of his fellow travellers curiously.

"The language o' flowers," was William's unexpected and staggering reply.

"Gorstrooth, that's won it!" ejaculated the dumbfounded questioner.

"Yus, the language o' flowers," repeated William, as one in a dream. "Some folks talks about the rose,—some likes the shamrock,—an' some jaws abaht the thistle, but"—with immense feeling—"blimy! gimme hops!"

In his early days Bill had been a small shop-keeper somewhere or other, and someone once asked him what had induced him to leave trade for the glorious uncertainty of the race-course.

"The free an' unfettered life!" cried William with enthusiasm; "there's on'y six days' racin' from 'Urst to Doncaster, say; an' then there's a peaceful Sunday with the guv'nor, drawin' up accounts an' wanglin' expenses. All 'e wants me to do I c'n do in an eighteen-hour day—an' after that me time's me absolute own!"

Financial crises were not wholly unknown in William's scheme of things, and the happenings at one sad and never-to-be-forgotten Newmarket compelled him to trudge the whole weary way back to the lights of London. Discussing the disastrous happenings with a bunch of sympathisers in his favourite house of call:

"Anything much strike you on the road from Newmarket, Bill?" he was asked.

"On'y the perishin' unsociability of the milestones," he replied gloomily; "you never see a couple of the beggars pally together."

And it was while in the throes of such another financial crisis that he approached a sympathetic publican and advanced a suggestion as to temporary assistance. The man of beer and bullion listened to the tale, and then:

"Now, Bill," he said, "you can have half a quid on one condition and on one condition only."

"Let's hear it, guv'nor," said Bill, resignedly.

"That never, so help you, not if Rothschild an' the whole of the Royal Family was to die to-morrow, leavin' you all their wealth, an' the Crown Jools as a makeweight, *never* will you promise to pay it back."

William thought hard. At last:

"The condition seems reasonable, guv'nor," he replied cautiously; "— bung it!"

At a Doncaster meeting a slight difference of opinion with a

Yorkshireman as big as York Minster brought about the inevitable consequences, and it was difficult to see William for dust and blood. To the undisguised dismay of his pals their champion began to show unmistakable signs of quitting, and fearing to lose their sport they sought to encourage him.

"Stop 'em, Bill; stop 'em!" they urged, as punch after punch landed.

"Stop 'em!" grunted William, spitting out a tooth, "I ain't missed one of 'em yet!"

Another smashing blow from the Tyke put the matter beyond all dispute—from William's point of view, at any rate. For when an enthusiast encouraged him with:

"Get into him Bill! Get *into* him! You're winnin', Bill: you're winnin'!"

"Am I?" retorted Bill, reaching for his coat, "then you can report as I left off a stinkin' 'ot fav'rite!"

Strange as it might at first sight appear, Bill Lakey looked upon the unfair handicap to which the opposite—or should it, in view of female competition, be "opposing?"—sex is subjected with a sympathetic eye.

At one Newmarket meeting he saw the then Mrs. Langtry put a hundred on a horse that subsequently ran a perfect pig.

"'Struth'!" was his remark after the disaster, "even I could ha' told 'er it wasn't goin'! *Wot* a lot o' stable information wimmen miss through not havin' to wait their turn in the shavin' shop on racin' mornin's!"

A tolerant soul was Lakey.

Pausing for a moment on the kerb by the Church House at Westminster, on the return to town after a hard day's racing, a regal motor bearing His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury rolled swiftly past, and its quiet magnificence attracted the envious regard of Bill's companion, a tic-tac expert who had seen better days.

"These 'ere Bishops 'as a plurry fine time of it, an' no error, cully," he snorted jealously.

"Oh, I dunno," replied Bill with magnificent tolerance. "In the speech 'e made afore the Licensin' Bill was shopped 'e owned as 'e 'adn't smelt a drop o' beer for thirty years!"

And should anyone doubt Bill's gift as a "lord of language," let the verdict of one who had no mean ability in the art of expression stand.

As Dick Dunn stood on the steps of the old Adelphi Hotel

at Liverpool, he was approached by a half-soused sailor who was wishful to sell a grey parrot which he had brought all the way from Africa. It was never tired of talking, he said, and, by cripes, it *could* talk!

"No doubt," said Dick, "but if you knew my pitchmy ye'd see I'm suited; it 'd be chuckin' money in the blanky gutter while I've got Bill Lakey!"

Towards the end of his days Bill joined the noble army of ear-biters, and one of his pet victims was a certain stout old penciller whose chief idiosyncracies were a fondness for Bill and a hatred of Doctors. The old boy became very ill with dropsy, and his wife did her best to get him to see a medical man, without avail, so at last she took the bull by the horns and called one in.

She led him to the bedroom door and went in to explain.

"My dear," she began, "for my sake, you must let the gentleman who has called tap you."

"Struth!" bawled the poor old chap, "me dying—an' you aint got the sense to keep Bill Lakey out!"

There was at times a magnificent terseness about Lakey—combined with a willingness to oblige.

Standing outside the "George" at Leicester, waiting for a course-bound char-à-banc, an old woman came along and accosted him.

"Can ye tell me where the Second Presbyterian Church is, Mister?"

"Blimy, no!" replied William. And then, as one deeply considering a question for the first time, "an', come to think of it, I'm jiggered if I know where the *first* one is, either!" he added thoughtfully.

It was Bill Lakey who vowed that he had actually seen the going of Lord Falmouth's watch-chain at Newmarket and pointed a moral thereon.

"He aint like his father," said Bill, alluding to the Viscount, "who could stand unmoved an' see Fred Archer lose the Derby on Galliard; he's all nerves and excitement, an' if you'd ha' seen him—strainin' and shiftin' about, with both hands holdin' his race-glasses tight to his eyes—why, blimy, the honestest pick-pocket breathin' couldn't ha' refrained an' still kept his self-respec'!"

But not all owners can watch their horses running with iron composure. The late Assheton Smith, towards the end, was

quite unable to see his favourite jumpers perform; Lady Meux was, for the same reason, compelled to give up racegoing, and even the late Duke of Devonshire felt the strain.

The late Duke was generally looked upon as the least emotional of men, but Corlett often told a story of standing with him at Epsom when the horses were at the post for the Derby of 1898. The Duke's horse, Dieudonné, was second favourite. The face of the owner betrayed no sign of excitement as he struck a match to light his cigarette, but his hand trembled so violently that he could not do it, and the cigarette remained unlighted till the race was over,—and Dieudonné beaten.

One last nugget from the Lakey lode.

Bill "owed a bit" for a long time to a certain publican in the Edgware Road, who, far back in the dawn of his history, had committed the indiscretion of marrying the lady with whom he—and others, many others—had aforetime had less definite dealings. The publican, losing his temper (and thus becoming the prize ass of the universe) wrote and told Bill that unless he "brassed up" he'd have him off the Turf.

"Ah! That's torn it!" mused Bill, and wrote in reply: "But what Turf d'ye mean—the bit in front of the lark's cage, or the two foot square your old woman used to stand on near the Serpentine in the days when first ye met her?"

A bookie with the gift of repartee was the late "Admiral" Lyons.

In the merry 'eighties, when Mr. Maurice Joseph, later known to the world—especially the world of the theatre—as Hugh Jay Didcott, was a follower of the Turf and a backer of horses, he was in the Ring at one of the Epsom Summer Meetings and was attracted by Lyons' boasted offer of 60 to 40 on the field.

"Done! I'll take it of you, Admiral!" (it being in reality an even money chance) answered Mr. Maurice Joseph Hugh Jay Didcott.

"No bet!" cried the "Admiral."

"What do you mean, 'no bet'? You publicly offered it!"

"I know I did," quoth the "Admiral," "but I don't want to bet with you."

"Why not? Am I not as good as you?"

"Yes," screamed Lyons, "better—very much better; but go an' bet with your equals!"

And it was, by the way, in the course of the action Didcott

v. Bellwood that the great Bessie let off her famous aphorism: "God has been good to the Irish, and—er—not so bad to the Jews," the judge himself joining in the gust of appreciative laughter which swept the court.

But as a class, your "turf commission agent" is often, and perhaps of necessity, a "lord of language." And a constant use of the loud pedal may deaden his sensibility to the lower-toned linguistic notes.

Amongst the *clientèle* of the "old" firm of Posh and Copp—as good a name as any other—was a promising, if mysterious, newcomer to the Turf whose persistent ill-luck was as meritorious, from the bookmakers' point of view, as the promptitude of his settlements. His references had been unimpeachable, and on his first week's business with the firm his losses amounted to £35, a cheque for which arrived by Monday's post. For four or five weeks his ill-luck persisted, and each Monday the welcome little cheque gladdened the hearts of the two partners. Week after week amounts varying between thirty and forty pounds found their way into the coffers of the "old firm" with the most admirable regularity, and Messrs. Posh and Copp began to experience the comfortable sensations of regular annuitants, old age pensioners, and confirmed dole-snatchers combined. But one sad and black Monday no cheque arrived.

Copp, the sordid commercial mind of the concern, expressed himself suitably, and, seating himself at the little hire-system roll-top desk which formed the chief article of office furniture, announced his intention of writing to the debtor, pointing out his egregious breach of every written and unwritten rule of racing etiquette.

"Easy, Alf, easy," blurted Posh, a trifle anxiously, "ye don't want to stall the beggar off altogether. Remember 'e's been pretty useful, an' if ye keep 'im sweet 'e'll likely as not come on again. Don't sling 'im any language; just a perlite little reminder."

"All right, all right!" snorted Copp, testily, breathing heavily through his nose in the throes of literary composition.

The pen scratched on for what seemed an interminable length, and again the merciful member of the firm protested.

"Ye only want two or three lines," he insinuated. "Don't go givin' 'im anythink to upset 'im; just a perlite little reminder, that's all."

"'Oo wants to upset 'im? Ain't the perlite little reminder exackly what I'm a givin' 'im?" grunted Copp, a trifle flushed with his exertions. "I don't want to upset 'im any more than you do!"

He wrote on; presently the pen ceased scratching, and the polite letter-writer looked up, a puzzled expression in his eyes.

"'Ow many 'r's' are there in 'bastard?" he demanded uneasily.

But with the reign of the big starting-price offices, the Bill Lakeys and the Copps have given place to assistants of a different character, and female labour has began to assert itself on the Turf as elsewhere. And female labour *does* assert itself!

She was an applicant for work on a farm as a "land girl," and when asked about sowing admitted that she detested plain needlework, nor did she care much about turnips; also she was nervous of cows, and preferred honey from the Stores to looking after bees.

"Wa-al," drawled the old farmer, "does thee knoa anything aboot horses?"

"Horses?" she repeated, brightening up visibly, "*Rather*! I know a lot about horses. You see, I was typist in a book-maker's office."

The sight of Joe Beckett "making a book" at a recent Sandown Park meeting recalled the memory of another effort in the same line by Pedlar Palmer, the "Box o' Tricks," at a bygone Epsom.

Pedlar, by the way, would seem to have lacked the business acumen—or the guardian angel—which would have made him stick to some of his easily gotten thousands; for instance, his first fight at the N.S.C. brought him £175 in cash, with which he retired, late at night, to a common lodging-house in Long Acre, and escaped next day with £27!

And was it not Pedlar Palmer who, with his first banking account overdrawn to the extent of £100, acknowledged the bank manager's little intimation with a heartfelt apology, a cheque for £125—and "keep the change!"

It was on the Hill at Epsom on Flying Fox's Derby Day that Palmer made his book, and folk on their way back from lunch at the Sports Club marquee paused to see what had attracted an unusually large crowd to one spot. Right in the middle of the mob stood Palmer, making a "silver" book on the Derby,

and, as a living illustration of what he himself fancied for the race, he had a poor, miserable, mangy vixen, fastened by a chain to a round table, and frightened out of her life. Every now and then, one of the Pedlar's pals would pull the terrified animal up in the air by the chain, causing it to swing to and fro, and shouting all the time:

"Take five to two this 'un! Take five to two Flyin' Fox!"

The street bookmaker hops periodically to the fore, and periodically the plain clothes men put in pleasant half-hours in marking him down. Hence the various curious devices to which he is compelled to resort.

Some dozen or so years ago, a certain brainy bookie, hunted out of his ususal resorts by the excessive vigilance of the police, circularised his clients to the effect that "from Tuesday on" he would be found in a certain Oxford Street tea-room of hitherto irreproachable respectablity, and be glad to pay and receive and execute commissions over a cheering cup of Lipton.

The clients duly rolled up, and the little tea-room sylphs were in a chronic state of amazement and exclamation at the roaring new business with sin-seared, middle-aged men.

Just before the 4.30 race the elderly lady in the cash-desk became suspicious, and going through the checks, found that in three hours the stout gentleman with the diamond rings had paid for 148 cups—74 of which he must have drunk himself.

Then she rang up the proprietor, who was at another branch, and arrived in a state of bewildered fury, just as the fat man was ordering his 151st and 152nd cups, and he cast that fat man out in indignation.

And yet some people hope to prosper!

But even the bookmakers don't always get it their own way, which is perhaps just as well.

Talking of hot' uns, years ago, at Yarmouth races, a man with half a sovereign in his hand approached the late Walter Gregory and asked him the price of a double event, Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire.

"All right," said Walter, taking the coin, "one thousand pounds to half-a-sovereign."

He then said that, the day being hot, he would spend the money on a bottle of champagne, which he did, the backer being invited to drink also—which *he* did.

The whole transaction had vanished from the memory of

Gregory until he was reminded of it six months later by the man claiming one thousand pounds, the "good thing" having come off. The money was paid, and the man went away, but shortly returned and said:

"Don't I get my stake money back?"

"The half sov. we had spent on champagne, of which he had half!" Gregory would yell as he told the story.

The man, of course, was within his rights, but he must have been a "hot 'un."

But still hotter was the hero of the following story.

He took a share in a sweepstake, winner £100, second £30, third £20, and £50 divided among the starters.

He was lucky enough to win, and on being paid £100, he claimed also his share of the £50 for the starters, contending that his horse must have been a starter or he could not have won, and, not being paid, denounced the whole thing as a swindle.

But even this gentleman ran a bad second to the cautious plunger on a bygone November Handicap. He handed his bookie a slip of paper with a coin enclosed. After the race was run the paper was opened, and the order ran:

"Switchcap £1 win. If win, £1 shop, 1, 2, 3."

"Did you pay?" someone asked the bookie.

"Yes—for his damn cheek!" was the reply.

Not but what bookmakers are occasionally long-suffering. On a memorable occasion, the tame bookmaker of the "Spoofs"—later a prosperous owner of horses—observed bitterly of poor little Shifter:

"It aint so much that he has five bob a time on the first four races an' then three quid on the last two—leaving hurriedly before either of them has started—but when he asks me to oblige him by tearing six or seven blank leaves out of my betting book to enable him to do some literary work, an' he sits down and writes an article on 'The Rapacity of the Ring,' I feel that he might draw the line *somewhere*!"

And let it go down to history that a fielder once gave a backer honourable best.

Seldom or never was Alec Harris nonplussed, but speech failed him when an old customer—who had been racing all of the last quarter of a century—backed his seventh winner in succession.

With the victor's account and cheque came a large medal,

twice the size of a crown-piece, contained in a case of scarlet satin, and giving the punter "best."

And here is another very true story of the interest bookies take in their clients. There is a theatrical manager who, in pre-war days, when he decided to back his fancy did so in bets of the sort that bring a horse from the 1000 to 30 to the 5 to 4 mark at a jump.

One day he was at Euston seeing off a beautiful comedienne on her way to America. Suddenly there appeared to him one of the biggest operators in the Ring, a pale man with beads of perspiration standing on his brow.

"You're not going to America, Mr. Blank, are ye?" he demanded breathlessly.

"Oh no," was the reply, "I'm just seeing some friends off."

The penciller mopped his forehead.

"Thank Gawd!" he blurted with heartfelt relief. "*I thought we was goin' to lose ye!*"

The philosophy, to say nothing of the economics, of your true racing follower is of a brand of its own, and there is often a refreshing nudity about it which brings a smile to the sophisticated.

It was in the year of Ambush's Grand National, and King Edward stood talking quietly with one or two of his intimates in the paddock at the back of Lord Derby's private stand, while the throng of race-goers held politely aloof from the little circle. Two of the "regulars," however, so absorbed in their discussion that they failed to observe the royal presence, continued their way and their talk until they stood within a couple of feet of the King. Then the chief speaker paused, ignorant of his audience, and raised his voice with renewed emphasis.

"Yes!" he remarked hotly, "I told 'im off, I c'n tell yer. 'Lorlummy!' I ses, 'you advertise MISFITS,' I ses. '*You made no muddy mistake abaht me*,' I ses; 'there's room for the Cheshire Cheese puddin' in the seat o' these trahsers,' I ses!"

And a great shout of deep-voiced laughter at his elbow caused the speaker to turn, in time to see the King pass on, shaking with mirth.

Once upon a time—in good King Edward's time, to be exact—a good artist and a good fellow painted a big, ambitious battle picture, and received a command to submit it to His Majesty. So it was conveyed to Buckingham Palace by a Bond Street sub-porter, who, poor chap, leading a somewhat irregular life

as "occasional" man and racecourse hanger-on, had no fixed lodging, but a temporary address at a County Council lodging house in Drury Lane.

Across the Green Park to Buckingham Palace he wheeled the painting on a small hand-cart, and in the allotted room at the Palace, by the direction of Caton Woodville, who accompanied him, he set the work upon an easel and prepared to retire. As he was about to leave, a Royal servant asked him if he had had any lunch—dinner, the porter called it naturally—and receiving a reply in the negative, conducted him to an ante-room, where he was served presently with a large dish of cold beef and ham, and a decanter of sherry.

The porter proceeded to tackle the new job, and barely had he accomplished the task, when the stately servant again appeared. Was there anything else he could do?

Most gratefully the porter answered that he did not think there was—unless—and a sudden thought clutched him—unless he *might* seize the opportunity of writing his monthly letter to his aged parent, an inmate of the Bookmakers' Almshouses—or some such institution. The pens in his lodging were all broken, the cat had upset the ink, and the landlady's kid had lost the stamps, and so forth and so on.

The regal retainer acquiesced, and led the horny-handed son of toil to a morocco-topped writing-table in an adjoining room, on which stood an oak stationery case containing some of the most sumptuous and pluperfect note-paper ever seen.

The son of labour modestly selected a sheet of quarto size and about the thickness of a thin sheet of ivory, embossed with the Royal Arms in red and blue and gold, and, beneath them, the name of the King's residence in brave gold block letters. He squared his elbows, obtruded his tongue, and, dipping the quill pen in the ormulu inkstand, and stirring it round three times for luck, began his filial composition. In five or six minutes he had set down, in fairish round hand, his greeting to his parent, and his formal opening sentence, when the door opened suddenly—and the King appeared.

Instantly the porter, recognising the King, sprang up and saluted in semi-military fashion, but the genial monarch at once put the poor, half-scared chap at his ease, and even asked amusedly to whom he was writing.

"Me father, in the Bookmakers' Almshouses, please Y'r Majesty, an' this is all I've written up to now."

And he handed the King the fragmentary epistle—and the King's face became convulsed, and the royal sides shook with laughter. Then His Majesty drew a sovereign from his pocket, and, still smiling, presented it to the embarrassed porter, bidding him on no account to hurry his literary composition, and to stay until he had quite finished it.

Many times the King told the story of the porter's letter, for the opening sentence, which had vastly tickled him, ran:

"Buckingham Palace,
Friday.

Dere Father,

Pleese note change of address."

But King Edward had a sense of humour, and one who was present told me of the hearty shout of laughter with which the royal guest, on a visit to Lord Colebroke, greeted the triumphal arch which the little village of Crawford had erected in his honour, and which bore the ambiguous legend:

"HASTE YE BACK!"

Triumphal arch inscriptions would seem to be tricky affairs, however, and on a royal visit to Glasgow a somewhat similar equivocal greeting was put up, but noticed and removed before the King arrived.

Over the entrance arch of the cemetery in Union Street was a huge placard:

"WELCOME TO YOUR MAJESTY!"

A diplomat himself, King Edward was appreciative of tact and fine discrimination in others, and a knowledge of the King's high standard of criticism in such matters often spurred those others on to high effort.

On one notable occasion, after an accident to his leg, His Majesty stayed at Brighton, and the chief constable of London-by-the-Sea was for a time mightily perturbed by the problem of a fixed seat opposite the King's windows, a seat only too often occupied by undesirables. To have removed the seat would have evoked Radical and Socialist comment; to have continually "moved on" tired wayfarers would have been equally provocative of discord.

To the scheme of re-painting it continually, day after day, during the King's visit, however, nobody could take the least objection.

X

ROMANO'S

Romano—A Well-spent Youth—The Discovery—Gub and D'Oyly Carte—The Roman Rule—The Old Brandy—A Ducal Dish—Drawbacks of Fame—Simpson's and the Old Conditions—Roman English—A " Fly Flat "—Bendi's Record—" Stiffy " Smith—Romano's Bar—" Captain Flash "—The Impecunious Client—The Modern Female and the *Cabinet Particulier*—The Racing Set—Abington Baird—The Power of Money—Baird's Mentality—Sam Lewis's Jackal—Baird's Gang—The Visit to America—The Old Brandy Process of Training—Charley Mitchell—The Blimey Merchant—Baird and the Stewards—Gentlemanly Riding—A Millionaire's Dress—Expensive Music—The Pain in the Cheque-book—Charles Morbey—A Pin with a Past—" Billy Stomachache "—Sullivan and Mitchell—Smith and Kilrain—Atkinson Grimshaw—" The Wicked Nobleman "—Harry Preston—Teddy Bayly—A Game of Billiards—" Taking a Liberty "—" Getabit " Methods—Max Malini—A " Command " to Sandringham—The Sloan Era—A Jewish Frequenter—Barney Barnato—A Libellous Book—Hebrew Hospitality—Barnato's Press-cuttings—Mr. Hugh Boscawen—The Markee de Leuville—" Fatty " Coleman and the Eaters—A Covent Garden Ball—Phil May as Brass-finisher—The Marquis of Anglesey—Horatio Bottomley and his Followers—" Jacky " Fisher.

FAME is a small thing, and great men, especially politicians, are often hideously out of touch with the actualities.

It was Sir John Simon who made history, of sorts, by referring in court to the Strand restaurant as " Roman-o's," with the " o " and the " a " short.

But this was too much for the opposing counsel, and when the then " Mr. " Wild, K.C., rose for the defence, he alluded to the mispronunciation in these telling words :

" The learned Solicitor-General, with every indication of a well-spent youth, called it Roman-o's ! "

In 1874 Alfonso Nicolino Romano, a head waiter at the Café Royal, bought with his savings a little fried fish shop in the Strand, converted it into a restaurant, added a bar, and christened it the Café Vaudeville.

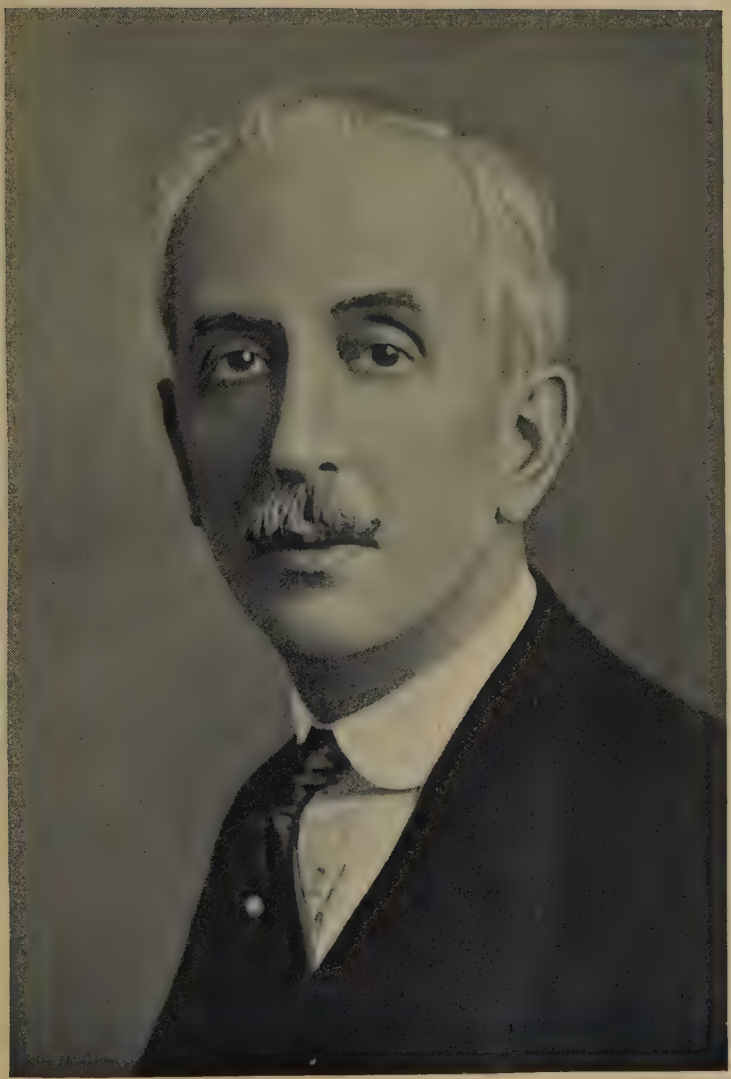
In those days Romano's possessed one central window, flanked by two doors, one of which led to the rooms above, and the other into the bar. In the window was a little

aquarium, into which the sons of Belial used to try and force each other late at night, and the goldfish occupants of which lived strenuous lives on a diet of cigar ash, burnt almonds, lemon rind and other oddments—to say nothing of the attempt on the part of "Hughie" Drummond, one of the most reckless of the clean-shirted Bohemians of the day, to take a swim with them.

Behind the bar was the restaurant, and, in the days when no one thought it undignified to be seen standing in a place of refreshment, the bar was invariably full of racing men, theatrical folk, coaching men, men from the Stock Exchange, and men about town of every type. The restaurant itself was more of a corridor than a room, with one line of tables, and at those tables were wont to assemble the merriest gatherings of good fellows—male and female—that ever became habitués of a London restaurant. Amongst the crowd who foregathered regularly were witty journalists, such as Shirley Brooks, Shifter, "Jimmy" Davis, "Pot" Stephens and Pitcher, who were always in evidence; men from the theatre—Charles Harris, for example, who, when the waiter called his order down the speaking tube, invariably added "pour le patron!"—Guardsmen such as "Billie" Fitzditto," "The Windsor Warrior," "Haddocks" and "The Bonetwister"; of the coaching men were "Dickie the Driver," "Swish" Broadwood—whose immortal remark to the dubious character is still remembered by the old brigade, but is, alas! unquotable—and "Partner," who used to bring jolly "old" Jim Selby to dine; Hughie Drummond and Fred Russell were among the men about town; and Arthur Roberts and "Mons" Marius among the theatrical fraternity.

And among the female good fellows there were Nellie Farren, the "Child," and "Jack" St. John; Bessie Bellwood lunched there five days out of six; the Sisters Leamar, who sang about Romano's being "the paradise in the Strand," and assured their audiences with fervour that "the wines and the women are grand"; and a dozen or two of Gaiety girls—for there was an indefinite alliance between Romano's and the Gaiety—many of whom married, and lived, and are living, "happy ever afterwards."

It says much for Romano that the staff he gathered together remained with the restaurant for years after his death, and more than one of them climbed the ladder of promotion, and at



Photograph, Fulsham and Banfield

LUIGI NAINTRE

least one, Mr. Luigi Naintre, is a prominent figure in the London *où l'on s'amuse—et dine*—of to-day.

After Romano's death a company, with Walter Pallant as chairman, and Colonel Newnham-Davis a member of the Board, purchased the restaurant, and Teddy Bayly became manager with Luigi as lieutenant. In time the lieutenant became manager, and again, in time, passed on to fresh conquests, his achievements at the Criterion and the Embassy being notable in modern gastronomic history.

Much has been written—and claimed—of the first discovery of Romano's, but as the first "Pink 'Un" who visited the "Roman's" refectory Gubbins is entitled to whatever credit may attach to the feat. And his visit was paid for the purpose of testing "the best macaroni in town"; the host being Richard D'Oyly Carte, and "with him" Alfred Cellier.

At that time, Romano's was about a third the present size, and in the front window exposed to public view were a hind-quarter of lamb, two symmetrical steaks with plated skewers in them turned brown with age, five lemons, three sticks of depressed rhubarb, and a couple of elderly tomatoes. The "best cellars in London" were then the subject of no proprietorial boast, and the favourite vintage was a sourish Chianti, or a bock of lager. It was the period when "The Sorcerer" was in full rehearsal at the old Opera Comique, and D'Oyly Carte was full of music, ambition and hope. A wild duck formed part of the historic menu, and the Roman was sent for, after the inspection of the bill, to be expostulated with on the price of the duck—eight shillings and sixpence. Enter the Roman, his first appearance in "Pink 'Un" eyes.

Then, as later, he enforced his inflexible rule,—never to reduce a bill, no matter to whom or on what account. It was for long the only certain rule of the establishment.

He offered no apology, no explanation; only a lengthy diatribe on the super-excellence of his fare as compared with that of other caterers. The guests admired his heroic independence and footed the bill, and—would they deign to drink a liqueur in honour of the host? Would they not?

And, in consequence of those liqueurs of marvellous brandy, the "little shanty" in which the fingers and throttles of lusty but indigent Italians once dealt in their primitive manner with the simple *plats* of their sunny home, became filled with the *élite*, daintiness and sport of the great city. The aristocracy

did not hold aloof; the bluest blood mingled with the intellectual attractions of the *demoiselles* on the other side of the footlights, and a revered and noble duke established *homard à l'Américaine* as the swagger dish of the fish course.

Fame brought its drawbacks—from the point of view of the earlier habitués—and as the restaurant grew more popular and more crowded, a spirit of commercialism dictated change after change. For reasons of space, the old luxuriously stuffed fauteuils disappeared, and were replaced by common-or-parlour chairs which gave a more matter-of fact appearance to the salon, and the old chairs and sofas were regretted.

"I do love dining at the dear old Roman's," once remarked an attractive nymph, all throat, diamonds and sables, "because you feel, when you are sitting half buried in them sofas as if you were a bally Eastern princess!"

But many who bewail the past have forgotten—if they ever knew—the conditions they affect to regret.

One by one the famous restaurants of old have been swept away or become transformed, and a modern generation, accustomed to cleanliness and light, would never tolerate some of them for one moment.

The old house of Simpson's, for example, was for a long time infested with rats—like most of the buildings on the river side of the Strand—and at times it was almost a struggle between the customer and the intelligent little rodents as to who should have the first nibble at the portion of "saddle." Late of an evening, when business was slack, the rats would have the place pretty much to themselves. But nobody seemed to mind much. The back of the huge grate was riddled with rat-holes and fine,—though trying to the weak-nerved,—effects could be produced by placing pieces of cheese in the fender, in full view of the audience. Modern knowledge and improvements have discouraged this sort of thing in gilded saloons, but the nerves of the ancients were highly tried.

The Roman made a close study of the habits and eccentricities of his clients—and wisely.

"Ah! 'e no good!" he once observed of a sportsman who was fond of vaunting of his powers with the gun, and had been attempting to restore his credit with a present of some birds, "'e go away for one day's shootings; 'e bring pore old Roman pair of braces of grouse; they shtinking; 'e buy them in London. Romano 'e prefer fresh braces off my poulterer."

And of another ingenious soul:

"'Im?" said Romano, "I know 'im. 'E all wrong! You come to my cellars I show you 'is stumers. Pore ole Romano 'e know 'is name by sight!"

The wily Romano rather cultivated his quaint method of English, but on one occasion he excelled himself, and struck even a bookmaker dumb. It was in the days when the horse Isosceles was proving a rare bitter pill in the matter of pronunciation for the Ring—and for backers too, for the matter of that.

"What price Icicles?" bawled one weary punter, and then it was that the Roman advanced with superior wisdom, and said ingratiatingly:

"'Ere, Missa Bookworm, 'ow much you lay me Sausages?"

In Romano's heap of bricks, which he fondly believed to be a fernery, for a short time reposed a china alligator, but its stay was a brief one, and the Roman persisted in crediting Shifter with its disappearance. And for several days, whenever the little man put in an appearance, he was greeted with an indignant:

"Hi! you! Missa Shif! You gimme back my elevator, or Romano 'e take out snubbons!"

But perhaps the Roman's classic effort in English was his impassioned query of Shifter, after a certain Kempton meeting:

"Hi! you! Missa Shif! What win de Nateral Gland Bleeders Coal Stakes?"

On his return from a holiday in his native land, a little crowd gathered round the Roman to hear his experiences.

"I go, well, to Venuses nex'," he continued after a vivid description of some place the name of which was absolutely undiscoverable.

"Yes, and what did you see in Venice, Roman?"

"What I see in Venuses? I see 'ouse of 'im you write plays of, the merchants of Venuses, what you call Shamrocks, by Henry Irving Esquire."

"Me no well," said Romano one afternoon, stroking his tummy, "me suffering from 'orrible disease."

"What is it?" asked someone disinterestedly, and hazarded various playful theories as to the nature of the Roman's complait.

"Ah, none of zose zings," replied the Italian with a sad smile. "Me no able to eat well, me no able to drink well; me 'ave the dispatchias."

And a medical student, who knew the language, opined that dyspepsia was the bourne the Roman was making for.

A confirmed gambler, Alfonso Nicolino Romano was, in racing slang, one of the " fly-est flats in the village " at several of the old English pastimes he affected, notably at that of the popular recreation known as " selling the pony." It is doubtless as good as most other methods of solving vexed financial problems, but it is desirable to know the pecuniary standing of the participants. Once upon a City and Suburban time, the cheery little Roman stood in the early evening in his bar, surrounded by an interesting crowd of Heaven's irreclaimables.

" Whatta bouta dinner ? " cried the little man ; " howa many here, eh ?—three, foura, five. Who sella pony for five dinners ? "

" I'll sell it, Roman ! " cried a gentleman in a pink shirt, who had been writing a sporting novel in order to pay his fine for assaulting the lady who had wrecked his life ; " I'll sell it ! "

He dived into his pocket and anon banged his closed fist on the counter.

" Call first, Roman."

" Alla righta—I call ' one '."

" Then you've bought it ! " shouted the vendor, opening his fist and disclosing a battered French ha'penny ; " and what's more, you're damn lucky, too, for at the present moment it's the on'y coin I've got in the wide, wide world ! "

But " selling the pony " has outlasted Romano's bar,—to say nothing of the interesting little game of " spoof," as witness.

Most Londoners remember a big poster on the street hoardings representing a little slavey flying before the advance of a vacuum cleaner.

Over the dinner table the artist of the picture can tell a good story of it.

Soon after its appearance, he received a note from a young lady—a complete stranger—addressed from a house in South Kensington, begging for a thumbnail sketch of the poster which she might add to her postcard collection. Being a gallant gentleman, Mr. Jack Hassall made the sketch on a card and posted it.

Two days later, the little lady again wrote, hoping that her request had not been deemed presumptuous, but adding wistfully that she would *so* value the sketch. Hassall, wondering how the first could have gone astray, made and posted a second.

ALFONSO NICOLINO ROMANO

Then came a third letter, bleating the abject apology of the youthful female plunged in dejection.

On consideration, it said, the writer should have seen from the first the utter unreasonableness of making such a request to a busy artist; still, if such inexcusable persistence and forwardness *could* be pardoned, *would* Mr. Hassall, etc., etc., etc. . . .

And the patient, generous artist dashed off and forwarded a third replica.

As he turned away from the pillar-box, worried and a trifle perplexed at the vagaries of the Post Office—which had caused so much mental stress to an innocent child—it occurred to him to turn up the address in the Post Office Directory; when he made the pleasing discovery that he was being vigorously spoofed by the fair pupils of Miss Euphemia Orkintrooler's Select Scholastic Establishment for the Daughters of the Aristocracy and Gentry.

For a time the vogue of the spelling bee ousted the ancient sport of "selling the pony," and the educational results were often entirely admirable.

"Long" Jack Jarvis, Arthur Roberts' collaborator in the famous tale of the Iron Pot—the tale with no ending—in the days of the spelling-bee mania was not quite so good a spelling sharp as the humorous Arthur, but he had a kinder heart.

They had arranged "lymph" for a stranger one afternoon at Romano's, and the simple rustic, with "l-y-m-p" preceding him, sat face to face with the impossible "h." Then did the kindly "Lord High Admiral" take pity and whisper hoarsely in his ear:

"You aint done; you're all right. You say 'u' and the next man *must* say 't,' which 'ud make the word 'lymput';—you know—those things that cling to rocks. And the worst of it was," continued the long one, when he used to tell the story, "that the beggar not only wouldn't follow my advice, but wasn't even grateful!"

Bendi, the Roman's head cellarman, carefully preserved a pictorial record of the rise of the famous restaurant, and in that record was a photograph which recalls a bibulous recollection.

The front of the café was once florally and magnificently decorated in honour of a royal wedding with the pretty wish, in Italian, blazing in electric letters from amongst the leaves:

"Viva gli sposi."

In rolled two excessively loyal gentlemen, one of whom remarked impersonally:

"Brandy's the d—d—drink f'r heroes, but, in admiration of y'r patriotism, give us two tots of this new stuff you're advertisin' outside!"

Times change, and for some time before its passing, Romano's bar became a rendezvous for certain "undesirables" of by no means uncertain financial standing.

One of them, whom we will call Captain "Flash," stood opposite the counter musing idly as to which two in the Cesarewitch he should have his monkey on, supposing that he found a thousand pound note in the gutter of Bedford Street, when a large, jovial person entered, and claimed his acquaintance, although "Flash" could not recall him.

"We were introduced in this very place," prompted the jovial one, but still the warrior remembered not.

"Anyhow, I'll try and bring it back to your memory," persisted the stranger. "We met one moment, we had a drink the next, and the third, you 'touched' me for a dollar."

"Oh, ah," said "Flash" dubiously, "but did—er—did nothing *unusual* occur?"

That same "Flash" supplied Pitcher with much amusing "copy" and stories of devious finance which duly appeared in black and pink. Over one such there threatened, momentarily, to be trouble. In it, "Flash," on his own recital, figured as the hero—or villain, if you please—in a quaint financial transaction, and, in the telling of the tale, Pitcher had made a reference to prison life that had upset the redoubtable one.

As we left No. 52 one publishing day, Pitcher and I encountered the *chevalier d'industrie*. He received us sourly.

"You've done it on me this time, an' no error, Mr. B.," he observed menacingly, "an' I'm off to see my shyster abaht it. A pretty little libel action you've been an' let yourself in for! Me in prison! Blimey, I'm absolutely 'unknown to the police,' —officially."

"Come and have a drink," said Pitcher curtly, and we turned into the old Green Dragon—another of Fleet Street's historical spots to be swept away by the tide of commercialism. To me, a journalistic novice, but with a legal training, the position seemed fairly desperate—not so to Pitcher. Pitch was right, for a libel action was settled, and damages assessed, at the bar of the Green Dragon, in the space of ten minutes. The

damages? Two whiskeys and soda, a ham sandwich, a public-house cigar and a "dollar ready." And the writer of the libel would not have lost the "dollar ready" had the luck of the toss not gone against him!

In its last days, some of the frequenters of Romano's bar were not exactly remunerative clients.

"Harry, dear boy," cried one such, who would, if pressed, describe himself as an actor, coming suddenly upon his fellow professional, who stood with a full tumbler in his hand, "I'll not ask you to treat me, as I know that you too are 'resting,' but, damn it, lad, you shall make a loving cup of it!"

And before the other could shout a protest, the parched one had seized the glass and drained two-thirds of it.

Yes, times change, and, for good or ill, the merry old days of late and early suppers seem gone for ever.

And then the modern female—a dominant party—has an influence that must be reckoned with. For instance:

Not so very long ago, one of London's best-known supper houses was privately in the market, and the most suave and diplomatic member of the board was perpetually on the premises to show prospective purchasers over. And one Saturday afternoon there turned up, with an agent's order to view, a stern, cold, middle-aged lady, with eyes as bright as a magician's, a severe air, and decided views about how a possible vegetarian and high-brow restaurant should be conducted.

She sniffed disparagingly at the kitchen and complained of the lack of light on the staircase, but when they came to the little *cabinets particuliers* on the first floor she stared in amazement.

"Gracious!" cried she, "who in the name of goodness patronises these poky little holes?"

"Madam," replied the past-master in diplomacy, "the *jeunesse dorée* and the ladies of the lighter stage. It is customary, before an hereditary peer weds the lady of his choice, to make a will, and sign over all his property to her; these are—er—the little offices in which are transacted and completed the delicate negotiations."

She glared at him stonily.

He possessed the wrought-iron mouth which never laughs unless its owner so desires, but, alas! his eyes were only meat. Crushing the agent's particulars into a hard ball of stationery, she banged it slap into those eyes, and—marched out.

In the racing set that frequented the Roman's were several "characters"—desirable, and the reverse, and amongst the reverse was "the Squire."

Up to the last of the pre-war days there were knocking about the West End of London men who had been "intimately associated" with that eccentric character Abington Baird, but few of them cared to talk of their experiences—for obvious reasons.

Had Baird lived, he might have proved another "Jubilee" and ended in bankruptcy, but, although he was supposed, in his short and hectic career, to have run through nearly three millions of his old father's money, fortunately for him, or rather for his next-of-kin, there was another million of which he knew nothing.

Throughout his life he was allowed to "run his own race," and the want of early training was responsible for much. A staunch believer in the American doctrine that if you have enough money you can do anything, he, to some extent, was justified in his belief.

By no means possessed of the fatal gift of beauty, it was no doubt his money rather than his personal attractions that induced a titled lady to take a special train to Newmarket to visit him, and on another occasion, he made the power of money felt by settling £100,000 on a lady of the theatre whom he admired. It was typical of his mentality that he borrowed this sum from Sam Lewis and paid 10 per cent. for it, notwithstanding the fact that he had three or four times the amount lying idle.

Within the last year or so there was walking about the West End a seedy, hawk-eyed, close-lipped individual, in a worn frock-coat, a well-brushed old top-hat, and frayed spats who could tell tales of the raising of that £100,000. For all I know, he may still be about.

The gang of pugilists, spongers and "getabits" who surrounded Baird traded on his one great vanity,—his belief in his tremendous hitting powers, and that heaven had designed him to be Champion of England, a belief that cost him tens of thousands of pounds. His blows, he was carefully told, were not the blows of an ordinary man, and on one notable occasion a very large sum was got out of him, to hush up, as was told him, the death of a man he was said to have killed. Baird remembered nothing of the incident, but the money was paid.

Again, on that fatal visit to America, he threw a glass of champagne over a bar-tender—a delicate little way he had of showing disapprobation or annoyance. The bar-tender reached for his revolver, and was instantly and ostentatiously seized by one of the "gang." This, Baird was told, had saved his life, as the man was a dead shot. The barman was, of course, squared with a large sum, and the "saviour of the Squire's life" also pocketed several thousands, so the little drama, which had been carefully rehearsed, was exceedingly profitable to the producers.

The "house-parties" at Newmarket were a profitable source of income to more than one of the "guests," and a mere ordinary individual who was induced to stay there for one week-end—and only one—told me that he had there conceived an intense admiration for a certain famous pugilist's histrionic powers.

At a certain stage of the old brandy process of training, the "Squire's" opinion of his fistic capacity would rise to preposterous heights, and a turn-up with the pugilist was an inevitable demonstration. It was, of course, the pugilist's duty to flatter his patron's self-esteem, and there was the interesting spectacle of a half-intoxicated, half-lunatic millionaire feebly belabouring the professional boxer, who, puffing artistically and simulating collapse, would gasp at intervals:

"'Edge a bit, Squire! 'Edge a bit! We're on'y tappin'!"

And then the "Squire" would steady himself for a straight left, which the professional would carefully receive on a callous portion of his face, turning immediately to the crowd of trusty retainers with the anguished query:

"How long have we been at it?"

Whereupon the valet, Monk (in later years the more or less affluent licensee of "The Horse and Groom" at Streatham) would reply enthusiastically:

"Damn near twenty minutes!" and although the encounter had barely lasted a couple of hundred seconds, everybody was perfectly happy and more than satisfied.

Altogether an edifying evening's sport.

Baird's "gang" was not one with which the innocent citizen was likely to interfere, and even citizens who were not precisely innocent refrained.

One sunny afternoon, four "gentlemen" were standing at the refreshment bar beneath the Brighton Grand Stand, and, whilst engaged in conversation, an industrious pickpocket

"tried" them. One of the "gentlemen," resenting the familiarity, collared the thief, whose confederate instantly appeared with the familiar:

"Blimy! you'd better let 'im go!"—but on recognising in the group Messrs. James Mace, Jim Smith, Charlie Mitchell and Baird, the "Blimy Merchant" decided very sensibly on retiring himself.

After pugilism, the egregious "Squire's" vanity was race-riding, but the possession of millions is of little avail in prolonged disagreements with the Stewards of the Jockey Club, as Baird found to his cost, and the Turf was the better for his absence. His peculiar form of humour did not appeal to the Stewards, and when he named his two-year-old, by Peter out of Maid of the Mint, Cockcrow, the august body declined to permit the name, and instructed Weatherby's to inform the owner of their objection.

In spite of your *laudator temporis acti*—each of us with a pre-war memory is one at times—it is difficult to imagine a gentleman rider and owner of Baird's eccentricities being tolerated for one moment on the Turf of the present day, which is in many ways purer and more wholesome than that of the 'eighties and 'nineties.

A typical exhibition of "gentleman riding" was given by "The Squire" at a Bank Holiday Meeting at Kempton Park. Odds of 7 to 4 were laid on him in a field of three. Holding his horse tight by the reins in order to keep his balance, he was beaten, and, beyond a few remarks on the disadvantages of training on neat brandy and the advantages of a balancing pole, nothing was said. But an eye-witness declared to me that it was better than any play to watch the faces of Baird's trainer, fine old W. G. Steevens, and his brother Tom, after the owner had dismounted, flung his saddle peevishly across the weighing-room, and stood staring into vacancy. The brothers had backed the horse, believing that he was bound to win, and for a space they sat, two funeral mutes, on the bench outside the weighing-room. Then the elder slowly pulled a railway time-table out of his pocket, studied it, and, without speaking, indicated a train to his brother; whereupon the two rose, and in single file walked heavily out of the paddock towards the station.

Baird's notion of dress was in keeping with his mentality, and on one occasion, when he had gone down to Royston to see "Billie" Brown—not improbably on the Grand Composer

and Necromancer muddle—as he walked from the station he asked of a passing farmer:

"Where's Billie Brown's place, Mister?"

"Oh, it's some way, me lad," replied the farmer, with a kindly glance at Baird's neckcloth and leggings, "and anyway, it's no use your going there, he's got twice as many lads as he's got hosses already."

And Baird was then worth about three millions.

Some thirty years ago an eminent Bond Street music firm, through their agents, scoured the music shops in the States in order to get a certain air correctly on the brass cylinder of a sumptuous music-box. When the box was finished, it cost something like a "monkey," yet one wet night at Newmarket when it suddenly rang out the wrong tune, its music-loving owner, Abington Baird, demolished it with a poker.

The wrong tune was one which had cost the silver-haired director of the Bond Street Aeolian firm so much trouble that from silver his hair had turned dead white. His somewhat æsthetic workmen, skilled musicians all, had never before been taken off the "Stabat Mater" to see that not a note was wrong in the setting of a classic entitled: "Phwat are They Doin', in the Name of Casey?"

It was one of Baird's many little eccentricities that, in certain moods, it was sheer physical pain for him to part with money.

For some time, Charles Morbey—whose eldest son, Capt. C. F. W. Morbey was killed in action in 1917—trained and managed Mr. "Abington's" horses, and many stories were told of their relations. The wealthy owner had a positive genius for inventing petty excuses for putting off payment of expenses. One day Morbey called for a cheque for stable disbursements. Baird affected to search his writing-desk.

"I can't find a pen," he said at last.

"I've thought of that," said Morbey promptly, producing one from his vest-pocket.

Baird took it, fumbled with it—and upset the ink-pot.

"I've thought of that too," said Morbey, producing a penny bottle of ink.

Another doubtful ornament of the town and Turf was "Billy Stomachache"—Lord Ailesbury,—whose curious mentality was, like Baird's, reflected in his curious clothing.

At one Lincoln meeting, which he attended in attire more than usually ornate, he was the victim of a little misunder-

standing which threatened to lead to unpleasantness. A big, coarse man eyed him over, and then, producing a welsher's ticket, demanded:

"Isn't that your name?"

"Go away!" said his lordship peevishly.

"Go away!" cried his lordship's retainers truculently.

"Oh, I see you've got your gang round you," snarled the man, "but as soon as you get your satchel on I mean to have my money!"

Any mention of the Marquis of Ailesbury would be hideously incomplete without a reference to the serious interest he took in the House of Lords and politics generally. They prate of Independent Parties, but who so independent nowadays as "Ducks"?

Did he not, on ordering his peer's robes, demand two sizable pockets in the skirts?

"Whatever for, m'lord?" asked the astonished tailor.

"For the bags of flour, old sport," replied the irrepressible peer; "the very first time the Lord Chancellor hands me any of his lip he's going to 'get the miller'!"

The poor old Roman was buried on the day "Little Eva" won the Lincolnshire in 1901. He had backed the horse to win £2,000, but as he died two days before the race, the bets were void.

After Romano's death, Teddy Bayly became manager of Romano's, preceding the admirable Luigi, who has since worked miracles at the Criterion and the Embassy.

Teddy Bayly was an "all-round" man if ever there was one. There was hardly a sport at which he was not proficient. He boxed, raced, played billiards, shot pigeons, drove a coach, sailed a yacht and entered keenly into life at large. No man can have warmed both hands at the fire of life more thoroughly than little Teddy. Now and then he burned his fingers. He had "lived" every day of the seventy-three years which were accounted to him.

He had a good deal to do with the National Sporting Club in its early days, managed Romano's for some time, ran the Hotel Folkestone at Boulogne,—better known as Bayly's,—with that curious creature "Fatty" Coleman as Master of Ceremonies, and afterwards had a partnership at the Queen's Hotel in Leicester Square.

There were few games that Teddy Bayly could not hold his own at.

Something like £5,000 depended on a game of billiards that he played with Bob Topping some years before the war. Useful player as Topping was, his break of some seventy-five soon after the start was unusual, and would have upset most opponents. At once the odds of five to four on Bayly veered round to four to one on Topping, but Teddy soon restored himself to favouritism, as, going to the table with the immortal remark:

"That's a nice sort of liberty for a mug to take!" he replied with a break of seventy-six.

Bayly met fortune, good or bad, with equanimity, and rarely did he complain.

But a fortnight or so before his death, as the dapper little man, looking a trifle weary, walked down the Strand he was "tapped" by a thick-eared, broken-nosed waster who had never fought, worked, nor even stolen—a born cadger.

"Do you know that blighter?" asked Teddy of his companion.

"Yes."

"Well, he's tapped me regularly for thirty years. You'd think he'd leave me alone now, as things are."

But what cadger ever had bowels? Wonderful are the methods of the persistent "getabit."

As George Robey was once entering the stage door he was held up by a "resting" brother professional, who announced impersonally that if only he could raise the fare to Sheffield he would be working over Easter.

"But, damitall!" said Robey, "It's not three hours ago, outside the Cavour, that you pitched me the same tale about going to Plymouth—and *touched*!"

Undefeated, the brazen one gulped, took a firm hold of his unsteady wits, and retorted with vast indignation:

"Well, what of it, George? What of it? Even you change your patter, don't you?"

Some five years after the Roman's death there appeared at Romano's one whose torturing of the long-suffering English language placed him *hors concours:* little Max Malini, the prestidigitateur, a character and a genius.

"Ach, bot he was a fine t'rillin' singer," he exclaimed one day in Romano's bar, after a night with the great basso. "Nefer before did I enchoyment myself so much—dough I was

halluf asleep at der time—as when he singt 'Locked in der shtabl mit der sheep!'"

And his heated and immortal defence of his friend Caruso, when the great tenor was the victim of the egregious methods of the New York police on a certain occasion, is unlikely to be forgotten by those who heard it. Flatly declaring his friend to be incapable of the absurd charge, little Max proceeded to rake the elusive complainant:

"But vould a *lady* haf called der cop? Nit. Vould your *vife* have didded it, Arthur? Nod on her dintype! A *lady* vould haf said: 'Oxcuse me, Johnny Fresh, but I cand stop, I haf a date alretty. Skiddoo!' Dat's vhat a *lady* vould haf did!"

But it was a rare incursion into verse that paralysed his admirers. Malini had been a journey in a crowded tube car, and so impressed had he been with the sights that he broke into verse, which, so far as I remember it, ran something like this:

"Sing a song of Toob cars, seats all full o' chaps,
Four-and-twenty ole girls hangin' py der straps;
Ven der door was opened der chaps pegins to read
Ceilin' advertisements aboud der preakfast feed.
Ain'd id?"

On one occasion—it was Queen Alexandra's birthday—Malini had been "commanded" to Sandringham by King Edward, and the evening previously half of Romano's *clientèle* were handing the little man tips on deportment, and alarming advice as to the etiquette he should practise in the Royal presence.

"An' remember, Max, whenever the King addresses you, you fall on your knees," announced one sportsman.

"On my knees," repeated Max obediently; "goot! I tink I remember dat!"

"An' don't forget to address him as 'Your Royal and Sacred Majesty'!" vociferated another authority.

"'Royal an' Sacred Majesty.' Goot. I remember dat!" replied the obedient Max.

"An', whatever you do, keep on walkin' backwards," commanded a third, whose intimacy with royal circles was confined to communications beginning "Edward, by the Grace of God, etc."

"Valk backwards? Goot. I remember dat."

The evening after the command Max held a little reception in the bar, and questions were on the tips of many curious tongues. But the little man forestalled all queries.

"Ach, und you tink I swallows all dat foolishnesses?" he chuckled contemptuously. "Me, Max Malini, I know der royalty etiquette pusiness all right, you bet me. Ven der King gome up to me an' say,—choost like dat,—'Ferry clefer, Mr. Malini, ferry clefer inteet!', I no fall on knees or say 'Royal an' Sacred' tommy-nonsense. No, I knows der etiquette. I choost say 'Most opliged, Royal Mister,' and der King he laugh, an' say 'Haf a cigar?' an' I say 'You bet!'"

During the Sloan era a daily and amusing visitor to Romano's bar—in the days when it occupied that floor accommodation where now the gilded youth of the moment anxiously awaits the coming of the musical-comedy doll who has promised to lunch with him—was one "Scamp" Montgomery, an American music-hall artiste by birth and profession, by nature a philosopher, and by force of habit the contributor of a "London Letter" to some obscure journal in the back-blocks of Oshkosh, Hannibalville, or some other unpronounceable locality of Gahd's Own Country.

"Scamp" had few qualifications as a newspaper man; he used his own private system of grammar, orthography, syntax and punctuation, and had a healthy contempt for all dictionaries, but his paper printed his epistles precisely as it received them, sometimes adding a kindly editorial note to the effect that though its contributor's spelling was rocky in places, and his language loose in spots, no reader could reasonably kick on the score that there was much lost motion. From a cutting that is before me I cull the following specimen of "Scamp's" literary style:

"Say, at grub time last night I got attached to one of them little Bohemium Packages, an' she was a Lallacooler all right, all right, althow I doant remember mutch about the food. Whee! This A.M. my tongue feels like One Yard of Parlor Carpet"—which extract proves that its author, if not exactly a scholar, was by way of being a stylist.

"Scamp" became attached to the Sloan entourage and with them he invaded Paris—and particularly Auteuil and Longchamps. But "Scamp" never took to the French; nothing in their arts or amusements appealed to him. Not that he did not sample everything, from the hors d'œuvres to the nuts—

even contriving to get himself invited to an encounter with rapiers in the Bois, which he left in disgust, when, after about an hour's fighting, one duellist pinked the other in the chin, the flow of blood being speedily stanched by the application of a small cake of alum by the barber at the Chatham.

"Nix on all Frenchmen; an Amurr'can gentleman has no use for them!" he declared, as he stood once more in Romano's bar.

"But, my dear sir," remonstrated Pitcher, his eyes twinkling, "*pray* remember there was *one* noble Frenchman, an unselfish lover of liberty, who offered his life and fortune for the holy cause of American independence. Don't forget *him*!"

"Who was *he* anyway?" asked "Scamp" dubiously.

"The great, the glorious Lafayette!" answered Pitcher, raising his glass with mock solemnity.

"Hully gee! *That* guy!" cried "Scamp" in sheer amazement. "Why, I played on the same bill with him six months ago in Oldham, an', say, his show is the bummest thing on the road!"

A live dog being worth more than a pride of dead lions, for one American citizen at least the then living music-hall illusionist, self-styled "The Great Lafayette," was of more immediate moment than a Pantheon full of dead idealists.

A frequenter of Romano's bar in pre-war days was a little Jew, named Cohen, who subsequently went to prison on, I fancy, a charge of criminal libel. Cohen interested Pitcher, as a human document, and the latter and I saw him fairly frequently. His stories, crude to the extreme of nudity, of South Africa in the early days, were certainly amusing, and provided my *confrère* with much "copy."

It needs a vivid stretch of imagination to reconstruct a picture of the 'seventies, of Cohen and Barnato, two young Jews freshly out from Whitechapel, standing in a newly pegged-out diamond field at Kimberley, and inventing a means for butting into an already flourishing industry with little or no capital. But if they had no capital, they had ideas.

There was an elderly Boer who rode out on an old pony two or three times to the Kaffir encampments. His pony, Cohen and Barnato argued, must know as much as he did, and might well be less secretive. So they bought the pony, allowing the Dutchman to overcharge them considerably. Next day, with Barney riding, and Cohen in attendance, the willing animal walked

unguided to a dozen of the leading kraals, at each of which the new partners bought all the gems in sight. They had come, seen and conquered in a single night; opposition was hopeless, hostility futile; they waxed absurdly rich.

One episode in this acquaintanceship of Pitcher's amused me. Cohen had published a book, which in the course of the proceedings the judge ordered to be suppressed owing to its libellous attacks. There was apparently but one copy in circulation, and that was the author's, and he was out on bail. Coming up to Pitch in the restaurant, where he and I were dining, the author seated himself at our table.

"I'd like you to read my book, Mr. B.," he said earnestly, "but the adjectival judge has forbidden me to circulate it." He thought hard. "Tell ye what," he said suddenly, "here's my address"—producing a card—"you call round to-morrow afternoon. The maid'll leave you in the hall while she comes to tell me, an' on the hatstand will be the book." He bent forward. "Slip it in yer pocket!" he whispered. "They can't say I lent it yer if yer pinch it!"

It was the same amusing individual who gave us a sidelight on Hebrew hospitality which was illuminative.

There was a dinner party at a certain Mosaic millionaire's near Stanhope Gate, and a little flutter at roulette followed the walnuts and wine. For some hours, the stillness of the palatial billiard-room was only broken by the whirring of the spinning disc and the click of the little marble falling into the compartment, but when the supper-gong went, the invariable "inquest" followed.

"Sixty-five quid I've done!" snapped the host with frank disgust. "How did you get on, Loo?"

"I've won about three pun' ten."

"Don't talk damn nonsense! How much *have* yer won?"

"I've told yer: three pun' ten."

"Oh, chuck it! Chuck it! Can't yer tell the truth about yer winnings? Yer oughter know by this time that no one's expected to tip the servants *here*."

In the height of his success a seedy-looking man, who described himself as a journalist, called on Barnato, and offered to cut out all the complimentary paragraphs appearing about the millionaire in the papers of the day. Seeing the man was "down on his luck," Barnato engaged him at £15 a month for the work, and, at the end of three months, the recipient of the

dole arrived with a large bundle of clippings, and asked if he was to go on with the work.

"No," said Barnato, "but I'll take you on for another three months at the same salary to cut out all the nasty things you can find printed about me."

Another three months passed, and once again the indefatigable paper-clipper turned up to report.

"Well," said Barnato, observing him empty-handed, "where are the results?"

"I haven't been able to bring 'em in," explained the man, "they're outside on two drays."

Many were the stories told of that Fleet Street and Strand notoriety, the *soi-disant* "Marquis de Leuville," who died in 1908.

His real name was Oliver, and he was the son of a barber in the Strand.

We of the staff saw the one and only meeting between old John and the Marquis de Leuville. It occurred just before a Romano lunch. The "Markee" came up to Master, made a low bow, and said:

"I am very pleased to make your acquaintance, Mistaire Corlett."

There was a world of meaning in the grunt with which the old man acknowledged the speech.

But the "Markee" was a harmless old humbug, and Pitcher painted his character in inimitable prose when he wrote his epitaph in January 1908.

"If ever I felt inclined to blush for my craft it was on Sunday morning when a weekly newspaper, having no legal consequences to fear, applied such epithets as 'Bravo and Imposter' to the once merry old soul who deceived nobody by calling himself the 'Marquis de Leuville.' I knew him well, and but for the fact that he drenched himself with patchouli, and swore that all his spare time was taken up by Countesses, he was an amusing old chap. A man who could fool himself, and his friends, by holding a reception at which only the French language was spoken, and who, after the ladies had withdrawn would warble a ballade of his creditors, with the refrain, 'They're beginning to know me now,' had too much humour to be taken as a serious imposter. True, there was one futile transaction, which, had it gone through, might have been framed in the indictment, but it died a-borning. Sixteen years ago, my

confrère, Shifter, essayed the flotation of a certain Society weekly as a limited liability company. And anything that Shifter was in, I was in also. The consulting solicitor to the job gave us a fortnight to find three noblemen willing to join the board before allotment; but by great good fortune we found all three in the self-same evening—and at the bar of the Royal Music Hall. They were the Duke of Manchester ('Kim' Mandeville), the Marquess of Ailesbury ('Billy Stomachache') and the Marquis de Leuville. Poor old 'Markee.' By placing a pinch of benzoate of soda on some of his 'chansons d'amour,' you may still keep them fresh for many years to come."

(And—talking of the bar at the Royal Music Hall—it was always averred that Didcott, the Yiddisher music-hall agent of the golden 'eighties, signalised his first meeting with the Duke of Manchester in that classic haunt by sticking a cockade—by Clarkson—on his coachman's hat.)

De Leuville was a man of leisure and affectation.

He used scent on his handkerchief, wore a huge cameo in his black satin scarf, and high heels to his boots, and had the biggest appetite—bar one—in all London. That one was Baron Eckhardstein, the German Embassy person who married Blundell Maple's only daughter.

Eckhardstein was a member of the old Pelican in Gerrard Street days, and at the bar of that amusing resort was once introduced to Pitch by Fatty Coleman. Coleman was lost in admiration of the Baron.

"He's absolutely the greatest man with a knife-and-fork and tumbler that I've ever seen," Fatty blurted in confidence; "an' the only two words of English he can speak fluently are 'Gesundheit and 'Prosit'!"

"Oh, he's a hell of a fellow!" cried Stephen on another occasion at the Pelican; "does his grilled sole, two chops, and four sausages for supper here night after night, and—and it's all paid for out o' bloomin' towel-airers!"

De Leuville's evening meal consisted frequently of two chops and four sausages (with vegetable accompaniments) at the Old Cheshire Cheese, flanked by a bottle of Burgundy.

Being suddenly desirous of attending a certain Covent Garden Ball in costume, he looked in at Clarkson's on the evening of the affair in search of a costume, but his girth presented a difficulty in regard to the "ready-to-wear" selection, and time did not permit of tailoring one. But the Marquis's eye had fallen

approvingly on a pantomime mask made of plaster, and representing the head and gills of a gigantic cod.

It should be this, the Markee swore, or nothing. But there was no underdress to it? A fig for such trifles!

Did Clarkson's workroom contain a roll of buckram? It did. Procure therefore the buckram—and five or six tailors. Fashion with scissors the body-piece of an enormous fish, with holes for protrusion of legs and arms. It would take two hours to make, protested the foreman. No matter; it was but ten o'clock, an hour or so at the Tivoli, and he would return at midnight.

A mightier triumph ne'er was known. The portly scion of an (alleged) French nobility "pretending not to greatness, yet was great"—as a single line from the merry little "Pelican" shall attest.

"But the happiest and most humorous get-up of the evening was that of the Most Noble the Marquis de Leuville, who came as 'A FRIED WHITING.'"

In the old Covent Garden Ball days there was a certain amount of light-heartedness to which one may be permitted to look back with a twinge of regret.

It was in the late 'nineties that Phil May went to one of them as a "brass-finisher"—which he certainly was—while rare old Peter Jackson, the fighting man, partly out of compliment to May, described himself as a "punch artist."

Peter was staying in some new lodgings in Osnaburgh something, at the bottom of Albany Street, and Phil immortalised in half-a-dozen lines the church spire which stood like a guardian over Portland Road Station. The big boxer occasionally forgot in the early a.m. where his home was, but the production of the sketch at any cab-rank always brought the response:

"All right, sir; Trinity Church, Marrerbun Road—hop in!"

In more recent days, a regular patron of Romano's, with his somewhat curious entourage, was Horatio Bottomley, and one afternoon he came over to the "Pink 'Un" table to report smoothly that he had scored off John Porter.

Corlett's stare of frank disbelief brought the story.

It seemed that, early in the week, driving to Goodwood he was passed by the fine old trainer, who met him later in the paddock, and chaffed him about his conveyance.

"And I thought I was behind the slowest horse in England," said Porter.

"No," said Bottomley suavely, "you were not. The slowest horse in England is the one you stuck into me for £6,000."

And Bottomley's entourage was indeed a curious one.

Outside the big clubmen, one of the principal winners over the 1902 Cesarewitch, won by Bottomley's Wargrave, was a prominent fish and fried chips purveyor in Camden Town—racing levels all ranks—and on the Monday, when he had some eleven hundred pounds to draw round about the pubs in the neighbourhood, he temporarily delivered his old father from the cleaning and gutting cellar below the shop, and dressed the old gentleman up for company.

There were brave doings that morning—the licensing laws were a trifle different in those days—from early morn the game went on, and every time Bill drew a ten or twenty pound note, he stood a bottle of champagne for Bill, Dad and the Bookie. At last came a substantial draw of some £220; it came off on licensed premises, and the landlord and his wife invited the trio into their parlour. It had to be two bottles of Moet that time.

Dad's rugged old face beamed with pride,—and good wine,—and he felt it incumbent on him to take his turn even if it cost him a year's earnings—not that he had the faintest idea of what the wine cost. So, as the second bottle was drained, he cleared his throat imperiously, thrust his hand into his pocket, and cried:

"Now, just you fill up those bottles again!" and grandly flung—a half-crown on the table.

But one war-time memory, of which Romano's is the background, remains in my mind above all others.

Lennard, Kennedy Jones, and I were lunching together, when a page-boy brought "K. J." a note which had been sent on by hand. He read it, and, as he read, his eyebrows lifted. Then he handed it to us to read. Scrawled in pencil across a half-sheet of paper were four or five lines, with words heavily underscored, and a galaxy of exclamation marks. The words—some of them strong ones—contained the news of "Jacky" Fisher's decision to resign, and the note was from the Admiral himself. It was a curious war.

XI

THE PITCHER

Youthful Ambitions—The *Sporting Life*—Joe Capp—A Roughish Diamond—Fighting Before Queen Victoria—The Strenuous Life— The Literate and the Illiterate—Racing Hotel Life—A Big Win—Pitcher as Raconteur—A Soho Warning—The Autograph Album—The Bore— Pitcher's Hunting Ground—His Circle—His Detestation of Change—N.S.C. Renovations and Memories—The Lure of London—Political Neuritis—The Perversion of "Prosser's Avenue"—The Intelligent Use of the Bar—Quaint Birds—The Gaiety Bar—John Hollingshead—The Gaiety Restaurant—The Passing of Romano's Bar—Billie Harris and the Tivoli—Two Historical Events—"The Latest"—Gubbins and the Shah of Persia—A Wasted Advertisement—Phil May and the *Punch* Cashier—Pitcher Demands a "Rise"—Corlett as a Napoleon of Finance.

AS a boy, Arthur Binstead's ambition was to be a black-and-white artist, and his drawings to many of his stories, and notably his "Modernised Aesop," show that he might have achieved success in that direction had not Destiny made him a sporting reporter.

His father, who ran the Continental Gallery in Bond Street,—one of the most popular picture shows of the West End in its time,—probably thought that Art did not offer such a favourable field for the hunting of the sovereign as a furniture factory would, as he put his young hopeful into the counting-house of a big firm in Tottenham Court Road. How he came to give up the prospect of becoming a second Waring for a precarious living on the racecourse and in a sporting newspaper office I never heard, but it was not long before he became a sub-editor of the *Sporting Life*, also contributing rhymed tips on the great races. He always declared that his tips created a record in non-success.

He had previously served an apprenticeship to the Turf with old Joe Capp, who conducted a sporting press agency, supplying London and provincial papers with the results of races and the betting, and "T'Owd Mon," as he was called, not only was the means of Pitcher's introduction to the "Pink 'Un" fraternity, but furnished him with endless material for his stories of racing and press life.

A roughish diamond was " Joe " Capp, commission agent and " Turf adviser," who, in the days of sobriquets, answered to that of " T'Owd Mon."

T'Owd Mon never hesitated to express his personal and private views when, in his opinion, the occasion demanded an expression, and when roused to indignation his flow of language was in a class by itself.

On one memorable occasion, as Queen Victoria's carriage entered the enclosure at Ascot, Mr. Joseph Capp did himself the honour of fighting before Her Majesty. Someone had made some remark or other which he resented, and in the august presence he promptly went for his man. In later years he was, in rare moods of modesty, wont to declare that the smallest moment of his life was when he was being escorted out of the enclosure by Lord Coventry on the one side and Admiral Rous on the other, the Admiral telling him all the way exactly what he thought of him.

And the old Admiral, if need arose, was no mean " lord of language."

A kind-hearted soul, at bottom, was old Joe Capp, but if the truth were (as it always should be) told, he kept about the worst-paid reportorial staff that ever went out racing. Capp's scribes had not only to keep abreast of their daily racecourse tasks at the pace at which racing is taken, but they had to get together by the week's end, by hook or by crook, the essential ready money for the hotel bill and the incidental expenses. In their surroundings they could only do this by backing horses or picking pockets, and, as the first expedient obviously presented fewest menaces to the continuation of their calling, they had frequently to leave their task of scribing to battle in the ring with the men with the leather lungs and leather satchels.

In 1883, T'Owd Mon had a staff of three assistants—Jack Berry, Jack Cobbett (brother of Martin Cobbett of *Referee* fame, and an admirable writer on open-air life), and Arthur Binstead, who was to become " Pitcher " of the " Pink 'Un," and it was with Joe Capp that Pitch learned much of his recondite and varied racing lore.

Not all professional followers of racing were as—literary, shall we call it?—as Joe Capp's staff, and to a typical crowd of such, Cobbett was relating how, at the meeting from which he had last come, the lavatory walls were inscribed in twenty different caligraphies with the name of the popular horse for

the big race, beneath all of which a scholar had pencilled: "Homunculi quanti sunt!" With the remark that he could not conceive what charm horse racing could have for so philosophic a soul, Cobbett rested on his oars.

"Well, what of it?" after a pause enquired an auditor in a vivid pink shirt with rhinoceros studs. "Did the funny-named 'un beat the bloomin' fav'rite after all?"

And a strenuous time the Capp scribes had of it.

Once in the Joe Capp days Pitcher arrived in Pontefract and was billeted in a small hotel close by the Tanshelf. Fain would he have washed after a hard day, but the room was innocent of water and of towels, so he rang the bell. There was no response, and he rang again—and again—and yet again. At the seventh summons, a human mountain as big as the rest of Yorkshire appeared.

"Did yeou ring?" it demanded truculently.

"I did—" began Pitcher.

"Well, doant thee do it again, or thee'll plurry likely get a thick ear!"

So the visitor to Pontefract went unwashed, and gained yet one more new experience in racing hotel life.

Pitch was never much of a backer of horses himself—probably he had been too intimate with bookmakers like Charlie Head and Dick Dunn, and knew the full strength of the game too well. The only big win I ever heard him mention was when Whitelegs won the Royal Hunt Cup. He did not see the race, but was on the river with Robert Barr, the novelist, and some other men, and heard the news at Boveney Lock. Startling the Thames swans with strains of "White legs, they never grow weary," they started for town in search of Charles Godfrey, the music-hall comedian, who had a share in the big bet.

Most of Pitcher's racing stories threw light on the crooked side of the game, for in his day ramping was much more prevalent than it is now, and sharps and flats are far more amusing in a story than heroes possessed of all the amiable virtues.

Of the many thousands of his admirers, but a small circle heard Pitcher's best stories; those he told with his lips as only he could tell them. As a raconteur there have been few to approach him. He never made the mistakes of over-acting and over-gesticulation; just as with his pen he found unerringly the exact word, the precise and unexpected phrase, which stamped

his work, so, in the pitching of one of his tales, an intonation, the flicker of an eyelid, made instantaneous points and visualised situations that his imitators might struggle for ever in vain to reproduce.

To Pitcher the world was a very amusing place, and the people in it, consciously or unconsciously—and if unconsciously, so much the better—were very amusing people. Little escaped him. A couple of loafers arguing at a street corner would furnish him with endless "copy"; given a "type" that appealed to him his fertile brain would evolve endless situations, and, in particular, the sheer ridiculousness of things was to him the very salt of life.

He was sometimes a little bewildering to those who did not know his ways and habits of thought.

I remember once leaving the Scala Theatre with him and a new acquaintance, when Pitch, for some curious reason—for he rarely smoked one—became obsessed with the desire for a cigar. None of us had a cigar case on him, so we searched for a tobacconist's. At last we found one and made for it, but on the very threshold Pitcher caught my arm.

"Great Scott! *No*!" he said firmly, and pointed to the sign from which frowned the name of the proprietor:

"B. Riski."

The new acquaintance stared and protested, but Pitch was adamant; declared that he knew his Soho too well to take foolish risks, and that after such a warning his appetite for tobacco had left him completely.

There is no doubt but that Pitch was occasionally disconcerting to those who did not know him.

Being asked to inscribe a line in a beautiful little actress's autograph album, he opened it at a pink page, in the top half of which a lady asked in violet ink Russell Lowell's question:

"O, what is so rare as a night in June?"

And what more natural than for Pitcher to write in his fastidious, meticulously neat "hand of write":

"How does a Chinaman with red whiskers strike you?"

At times Pitch was a trifle impatient of bores, and about the year of St Amant's Derby—and, pray, what better system is there of fixing pre-war dates?—a curious elderly individual, of apparent means and no occupation made a nuisance of himself by infesting every one of Pitch's ports of call, from

Romano's to the National Sporting, from the National Sporting to the Alhambra, at the precise hours at which it was his victim's wont to put in an appearance.

One night, at the Alhambra, the limit was reached.

Breaking through the talking knot of men, the bore laid his hand on Binstead's arm.

"Speaking of evening kit," he blathered, "I am having built at my tailors a thoroughly old-fashioned black Inverness cape, such as we used to wear in the early 'seventies; cut like a Mexican poncho from a single piece of cloth, and lined with black quilted satin; when I get this on . . ."

But poor Pitcher could stand it no longer.

"Aye, old friend," he broke in, with dangerous suavity, "when you get it on, with a pair of old, black kid gloves, a malacca cane, and a bit of soap at the ends of your moustaches, you ought to go to the next Covent Garden Ball as an Indiscreet Youth's Doctor!"

Binstead lived his life among amusing people, and he was himself one of the cherished figures of Bohemia. He and little Willie Goldberg, the Shifter, were Damon and Pythias, and their adventures in real life were far more amusing than anything any writer of fiction has imagined. Pitcher himself set some of them down at one time or another in black and pink. It was he who introduced the "Pink 'Un" world to the "charming Sisters Leamar," and many a time did he draw Bessie Bellwood out into the wildest flights of humour as they sat together at one of the tables in the old Roman's.

Romano's—Romano's bar in particular—was one of his happy hunting grounds for stories, and the "Brown Mouse," the cheery barmaid who presided there, found herself a personality of great fame owing to his writings.

Arthur Binstead's acquaintances and cronies were as varied as was his knowledge of life.

Lord Rosebery had a high appreciation of his writings; the Rothschilds held him in esteem; Hilaire Belloc once wrote that Pitcher's books were among the very small library from which he never was parted; Sam Adams of the old Trocadero was one of his intimates; Harry Preston was one of his closest friends, and, with "Swears" as colleague, he wrote one of the best books of the London life of his day,—"A Pink 'Un and a Pelican," rivalled only by that classic of Bohemia, "Pitcher in Paradise."

His philosophy and his outlook on life can be gathered from his work.

"Being neither Christian nor Jew," he once wrote, "I am inspired by neither love nor hatred; as for the purity of any literary style—should *that* at times put my subject in too strong a light—why, I learnt it, as my old friend John Hollingshead said to William Makepeace Thackeray, mostly from costermongers and skittle-sharps."

It has always been part of the joke in the journals in which Pitcher made his fame that the members of the staff should represent themselves and each other as disreputable, out-at-elbow Bohemians cadging on their proprietor, and the joke served its purpose, but it is as well that the veil should sometimes be raised and that the outer world should realise what manner of man it is who has contributed to its gaiety.

With Arthur Binstead his work suggested a certain carelessness of living, almost of Alsatia, but the man himself impressed the stranger as almost pedantically precise. Being a very big man, this neatness, a little suggestive of the boudoir, although never for a moment foppish, was the more noticeable. With pale face, grave in repose, and keen eyes which little escaped, Binstead was far in appearance from the ideal roysterer which his readers had conjured up from his writings.

And Pitcher detested change. Never was there such a conservative, such a creature of habit, and, for the very reason that his habits were pleasant ones, he loathed the compulsion of varying them.

"It is a part of human vanity to nourish memories which will only come with low spirits," observed Pitcher to me once, in a rare mood of gloom. "It is also a part of human folly for a melancholy man to attempt to 'drown his sorrows'—folly, because the accursed things have already had too many swimming lessons. Everything is folly, and the greatest folly of all lies in taking life too seriously."

One evening in the summer of 1911, Pitcher and I visited the old familiar National Sporting Club for the last time, for the process of reconstruction was in full swing. Behind the well-known façade, the old building lay in scattered, dissolute ruins.

Ten feet below the surface of the street, a broad area of broken bricks, of shivered columns and shattered pillars, wrecked cornices, and little mounds of limestone dust, were all

that remained of the one-time mansion of Sir Kenelm Digby: later on the "Star" Assembly Rooms for men of rank—it was no unusual thing for nine dukes to dine there of a night—later still, Mr. W. C. Evans's Hotel, Supper Rooms and Music Hall; then the Falstaff Club for gay bachelors of both sexes; and last of all, the N.S.C. Gone, gone for ever were the four walls that looked down upon Sir Kenelm inventing, in his age of swordsmanship, crude chemical cures for sword-wounds—possibly as a pleasant distraction to his vain endeavours to keep a flighty young wife in order; walls that in 1696 accommodated the first Cabinet Council held in England; walls that witnessed entertainments immortalised by Thackeray; walls that heard Paddy Green and poor old Jonghmanns bellowing: "One more glass before we're paa-arteeng!"; walls that witnessed the greatest glove-fight within living memory, when Slavin took his terrific hiding at the hands of Peter Jackson.

As we stood a minute looking at the swirls of dust rising as brick after brick crashed down under the picks, I realised once again the utter conservatism of Binstead. If ever a man hated change, it was he. The pleasant places, connected in memory for ever with pleasant times, pleasant people, should remain in material being for ever; in a sense, the hand of the improver was the hand of the iconoclast.

"Ah, well," he sighed, "wasn't it Nietsche who said that only where there are graves are there resurrections? . . . Thank God, they've left the kitchens and the bars. Come and have a chop!"

"In my love of London," once wrote Pitcher, "I do not yield even to the ancient historian, Fitzstephen, who extolled this Metropolis for the wholesomeness of its climate, the nature of its situation, the honour of its citizens, the chastity of its matrons, and the number of illustrious persons who lived in it," and he was wont to declare that if ever a Piccadilly boy-messenger increased his nobility, that youth was one Collins, who, after being knocked down by a taxi, was given a fortnight's holiday by Lord Lansdowne at his beautiful place at Colne. Seen at the end of the first week, the youth was scarcely enthusiastic.

"Of course, I'm very grateful to 'em all," he said, "but this ain't London! I looks out over the park every night; there ain't a light anywhere—nor a sound—not even a copper on duty! I *do* look forward to gettin' back to old London! I

shall shake hands with meself—not 'arf !—when I see Piccadilly again ! "

Nothing, Pitch would stoutly declare, was more strongly indicative of London's degeneracy, or what nincompoop leader writers in a pothering age of political neuritis preferred to call " the mercantile spirit of the age," than the deplorable fact that, whenever a famous pothouse disappeared, the place was taken by some accursed commercial concern in no way interested in maintaining alcohol in that honourable place in " the history of our race, in the history of the world, and in the history of civilisation " assigned to it by Sir James Crichton-Browne. To Pitcher, and those of his era, there was more than a trifle of pathos in the inscription on the mock-mourning card which a bibulous wit of 1911 attached to the closed doors of Romano's Buffet :

" Hush ! Tread softly ! I am no more ! "

and when the licence of what was once the Gaiety Bar, or " Prossers' Avenue," lapsed for ever, in order that the premises should be perverted to the use of the Marconi people, Pitch was loud in his detestation of the change, and sadly quoted Anatole France's truism : " Humanity is composed of the dead and the living ; the dead are much the more numerous."

But he admitted that times had changed, much as he detested the changes. Bars, such as Romano's and the Gaiety, no longer fulfilled the social purposes which had endeared them to him ; they were no longer convivial meeting places for little coteries of amusing cronies, of men who had each and all done and were doing things in their various worlds ; who " used " their " houses of call " not for soaking, but as informal clubs, and who swapped stories and experiences with congenial souls until the midnight supper-time arrived.

Such a use of the bar, he would maintain, was unknown to the rising generation of young men, who lunched on scrambled eggs and buttered scones, and drank draught ginger-beer drawn through a zinc tap, and who eventually died of corrosive poisoning. Not for that generation was the noble and intelligent use of bars that their progenitors had, and thus it has fallen that the old Pelican is now a telephone exchange, the old Barn a woollen warehouse, Long's a mere adjunct to a portmanteau shop, and certain minor shrines respectively a tea-restaurant, a patent-food foundry, and a German delicatessen-store.

In the 'eighties and 'nineties, and even down to the early nineteen hundreds, there were half-a-dozen bars in London where the live wires of theatrical and sporting journalism were certain to be found—each at his accustomed hour—and the Gaiety was one of them. And wheresoever is the carcase of the easy-going writer or artist to be found, there will the peripatetic cadgers be gathered together. Thus the indigent "ear-biters" were responsible for bringing upon the Gaiety bar the unpleasant nickname, "Prossers' Avenue."

And quaint birds some of the writing-men were. George R. Sims, the very last time I saw him, told once again the story of his introduction, in the Gaiety bar, to Frederick William Broughton, the author of "Ruth's Romance," and a score of similar pieces.

"Mr. Broughton—Mr. Sims," said the introducer.

Freddie bowed politely, then, gazing distantly over the tops of his eyeglasses, asked earnestly of the introducer:

"By the way, B., do you know why sawdust is like cook-shop pudding?"

B. at once admitted his ignorance, whereupon Broughton, with an air of profound conviction:

"Because you get such a hell of a lot of it for tuppence."

Then gravely he turned and hurried away.

And it was in the Gaiety Bar that Pitcher listened irritably and wearily to the eternal self-laudation of a veteran actor, more remarkable for his wide dramatic range than for his personal fastidiousness.

"Aye," he mouthed, "I have had my vicissitudes as well as my triumphs." And he spooned the floating cherry out of someone else's American drink. "More than once have I known what it is to travel from town to town on my luggage, and—"

"And in that case," broke in Pitcher sourly, "as I never knew you to possess any luggage—except a couple of paper collars, a stick of grease-paint and a hare's foot, you could scarcely have paid your fare from Bow to Stratford!"

Unwisely the histrion took offence—unwisely because it drew from Pitcher much florid and mendacious description of the veteran's triumphs: especially of his Laertes at Worcester,—anxiously pulling out a Waterbury watch to see if the funeral wasn't disgracefully late, as he had to catch the night-train to Birmingham.

An older generation will look back with kindly regret to the

fraternity of merry middle-aged old boys, the "Gaiety Sociables," who sipped their liquor under the sage advice and watchful eye of Doctor Joseph Pope,—"Jope"—or reversed their hats in Bonapartic fashion when challenged by the chief "Shenanagin," Bill Holland. There were Foster (head of the Covent Garden Theatre Syndicate), Jimmy Flood (engaged on a gardening newspaper, and the despair of the enthusiastic rose-growers who signally failed to raise the variegated blooms Jimmy thought out so carefully in the Gaiety bar), Harry Ulph, Fred Hughes, Jack Bayliss, Purkiss, and Sam Adams (from the Royal Music Hall), and a score of others, not by any means forgetting wonderful old John Hollingshead, the original "Guv'nor" of the Gaiety. What versatility was his!

It must be well over forty years ago that, as manager of the Alhambra, in his spare moments he would sit in the Green Room, and in that sanctuary write highly moral and deeply instructive articles for *Good Words*, then under the editorship of Dr. Norman M'Leod, Queen Victoria's chaplain!

The old Gaiety Restaurant was supposed to be a white elephant to its proprietors, and, though they pulled the old place down and had a grand battue of rats amongst the ruins, and erected a brand-new building, the old tradition clung.

Amongst some papers Pitcher once gave me—souvenirs of no value whatever except to the owner and his intimates—is a menu of a supper at the Gaiety in May 1905.

It was sent over to him from a neighbouring table, and bears on the face the hurriedly pencilled inscription: "To Arthur M. Binstead. Urgent.", while on the back, in an equally hurried hand, is the familiar interrogation:

"Have you £2 about you, old man?"

"Prossers' Avenue," to the very last.

In 1910, Romano's Bar ceased to exist, and it was as well that it died, for the "men who walked within it" had mostly disappeared—many were broke, more had gone to solve the question of the great why and wherefore; while most of those still alive had been told seriously by their doctors that liquor with food was the only liquor permissible.

It was once the proud boast of the Strand *habitué* that that thoroughfare held out no hope to the ordinary tradesman; that from Temple Bar to Charing Cross there was neither a butcher's, nor a baker's, nor a grocer's, nor a draper's. But the scutcheon came near to being blotched when Billie Harris,

"the Sausage King," opened a cookshop one door west of Romano's and proceeded to fill his windows with great slabs of wholesome but barbaric uncooked beef and mutton. And whenever Billie started frying onions, Romano used to descend to his cellar and pray for a change of wind.

And Harris had grim designs on the Tivoli—then a Swiss-German restaurant, with an oak-panelled Gambrinus bier-halle, where one got the coolest Pilsener and the very best mashed potatoes in London. Moreover it enjoyed the huge advantage of a music licence. The band was a good one, and when, as sometimes happened, the Flushing boat was delayed, and Monday diners had to take the previous Friday's Frankfurters, you got a rendering of the "Wacht am Rhein" in which even the ex-infantrymen serving as waiters enthusiastically joined, and if a pallid British diner dared to protest,—why, somebody accidentally stepped on him!

Yet the place did not succeed, and Harris pined for it. He prided himself on catering for the working-man, who, he insisted, wanted plenty of good food and plenty of good music. He proposed therefore, if the Tivoli ever fell into his hands, to fill the banqueting-hall with hundreds of little square, marble-topped tables, and here, while the horny-handed sons of toil filled their bellies with good food, they should drink in vocal and instrumental music of the highest class.

"They'll flock here from every part of London!" Harris would gloat, as his imagination soared on rosy wings, "an' I'll make a fortune. On'y think of it—a ten-ounce pork chop and Ben Davies for fippence!"

Many were the journals produced from time to time by members and ex-members of Corlett's staff.

Two events of practically equal historic interest—for all the effect they have had on the world since—took place in 1896. London basked for a while in the sunshine of the Shah of Persia's countenance, to say nothing of his diamonds, and Nathaniel Gubbins, otherwise Edward Spencer, with some assistance from Pitcher, produced a small sporting sheet felicitously called *The Latest*.

You will say there is no connection between these events. Wait and see.

Whether Gub could earn a satisfactory return from a poorly printed two page journal mainly concerned with Metropolitan racing depended almost entirely on the publicity attainable,

and, as *The Latest* had no editorial staff, was " pulled " on sheets of custard-coloured paper on a small hand press in the back-room of a Strand oyster-shop, and " Stop Press " news was dropped in by means of a rubber stamp, a city-wide publicity seemed unlikely, if not unattainable.

But the strong man is never defeated.

There was one asset on the Strand premises, in a giant named Flynn, who, having at one time of his career been familiar with the sawdust of the circus ring, was obviously the ideal handy-man for a paper dealing with horse-flesh. Rigged out in an old livery coat and a gold-braided hat, Flynn patrolled the Strand with *The Latest* and obtained a little much-needed local publicity.

In 1896, the First September Race Meeting at Alexandra Park fell on a Saturday, and on that Saturday the roadway of the Strand had been sanded, flags and banners fluttered, and police notices emphasised the fact that the King of Kings was about to visit the Guildhall.

At Pitch dropped in at the " office " of *The Latest*, he found the giant Flynn in the act of completing a toilet which included a gorgeous pair of pink cloth overalls, with various other blue and yellow garments to follow.

" It might be worth your while to stay and watch the proceedings," said Gub. " I propose to bring to the notice of this elderly cock-eyed heathen from the Middle East the noble British sport of punting, which brings into play all the hitherto unused muscles of the little pigskin notecase."

And, as it wanted some ten or fifteen minutes to the advertised time of the potentate's arrival, the pair adjourned to the " Golden Cross."

Suddenly a glorious reveillé sounded—the signal that the State cavalcade was rounding the corner of Cockspur Street. Out into the road ran the editor and proprietor and his confrère, and gazed upon a noble sight.

The troops had come to the " Present Arms ! " The royal coachmen had reined up their steeds, and they and the scarlet-coated outriders had removed their gold-braided hats. Nor was this all. The fanfare had been the signal for the hasty approach of Octavius Flynn, looking ten feet high in superb pink overalls, blue and gold braided tunic, and towering bear-skin.

While a mild consternation lasted, he saluted the King of

Kings, who returned his salaam, and also accepted, without understanding, the market bunch of pink and white garden-stuff Flynn had rolled together into a bouquet.

At the moment he presented the floral tribute, Flynn forced into the right fist of the flabbergasted potentate a yellowish paper scroll, which looked like a petition in the original Persian, until the Shah permitted it of its own weight to unroll. And then it was seen to be a double-crown contents bill, laying upon one and all, including the Shah-in-Shah, the timely enjoinder:

" DON'T FORGET !
WE DID THE HAT TRICK
LAST SATURDAY.
SOME MORE DOUBLETS (4's)
AND SAUTEUSES (5's)
TO-DAY ! "

It was a splendid " ad "—while it lasted, but it did not last long, for while one fat inspector of " C " division rudely tore the announcement from the Shah's entirely willing hands, a second gave Flynn " the double knee in the pantry-parts,"—a low trick invented aeons ago by the Haymarket bullies.

" Well, I'm damned ! " exclaimed Gub, a few hours later, as he read the racing results. " If the old whitey-brown blighter only knew of it, he'd go round to Vine Street and smash their windows ! Those interfering rozzers did him out of *three* winners amounting in the aggregate to sixteen to one ! I've a dashed good mind to write to Dorchester House and tell him so ! "

It is always a tragedy to register wasted business enterprise, for to intelligent business enterprise, according to the late Lord Northcliffe, is to be ascribed England's greatness. Although, come to think of it, I once heard old George Hodgman, in Mr. Topham's private luncheon room at Liverpool during a National meeting, ascribe England's greatness to the top-hat fashion and beer for breakfast. So who knows ?

As I have hinted, Corlett's salary list did not err on the side of wild extravagance, and once, inspired by Phil May, Pitcher rashly suggested a " rise."

One hot July afternoon in Fleet Street—the sort of afternoon

Photograph : Elliot and Fry

PHIL MAY

when even the flies are too lazy to move their wings, and are content to crawl—Pitch bumped into Phil May.

May seemed preoccupied, and over a libation in the old "Green Dragon" admitted that he was upon an expedition the success of which seemed well-nigh desperate. The signs of the Zodiac were dead against him, he declared, and he craved for moral support. Would Pitcher accord him moral support? Pitch would, and over another whiskey and soda enquired the nature of the enterprise. It was nothing less than a raid on the *Punch* office. May craved the "Pink 'Un's" presence as bottle-holder in what he felt would be almost a hand-to-hand tussle with one of the kindliest of Mr. Punch's staff, the venerable cashier—ordinarily a gentle, benevolent person, but whose nerves had already begun to crack under the strain of May's tangled financial reckonings with the firm of Bradbury & Agnew.

With the promise of support, Phil's spirits began to revive; as they revived, his familiar gaiety returned and he let his fancy loose upon his favourite hobby—the delivery of the lines of the braggart Pistol. Had he not been a great master of black-and-white, May might have been a great actor. On the other hand, he might not. But the pot-boy of the "Green Dragon," who, with a damp leather, was removing the traces of wandering flies from the spotted glass globes, grinned when addressed in such terms as : "Sweet Knight, I kiss thy neif!" rudely changing to "Base tike! call'st thou me host? Now, by this hand, I swear, I scorn the term; nor shall my Nell keep lodgers!"

The attitude of Mr. Punch's chief cashier, when bluntly asked if he could "put his paw on any loose sugar," was one of extreme reticence. He was genuinely fond of May, but as genuinely deplored the artist's abysmal ignorance of anything connected with finance. Sorrowfully he reminded the erratic genius that only three days previously he had been permitted to place a bit of paper in the cash-box for thirty sovereigns, and that notwithstanding that his salary was already drawn for seven weeks in advance. Moreover, he had "paid in" for the day and there was nothing in the till.

Undefeated, May asked to see Mr. Agnew, but was told he was away. Frank Burnand, then. Gone to the Riviera. Then followed an appeal to the better feelings of the guardian of the gold himself, and the first ray of hope gleamed when the kindly old gentleman incautiously enquired why the immediate

advance of twenty pounds was so urgently needed. With superb readiness:

"There's a bailiff in possession in the front kitchen under a judgment summons, and—" began May.

But the old gentleman's tired sigh and incredulous shrug told Phil the shot had not reached the target. The petitioner was untimely reminded that he had once ironically proclaimed the advantages of *always* having a man in possession, especially instancing a certain old "bum" who could wait at table, polish silver, and clean leather riding-breeches as well as any valet.

"You interrupt me," said May swiftly. "Let me finish what I have to say. There is a bailiff in possession of the front kitchen under a judgment summons, *and* he doesn't hit it with the fellow who's in possession of the *back* kitchen under a bill-of-sale. The front kitchen fellow is a teetotaler, and the back kitchen chap 'likes his drop.' I wouldn't care, but they meet in the hall to argue it out. This very afternoon as I left, they were *both* well canned, and were pulling off their coats to settle the points in difference. The endurance of the artistic temperament has its limit, and—and I've left my full-page drawing unfinished until I can compose my mind. I couldn't stand the strain of the raging Philistines one moment longer!"

After a prolonged look at May, and stroking his head sadly, the kind old gentleman extracted from a drawer a tenner, a fiver, and five sovereigns.

And ten minutes later, the hansom drew up at Verrey's.

Inspired probably by the victory of his friend, after some little cogitation, the Pitcher determined that he, too, had a desire for an extra allowance of the munition of life, so addressed to his editor and proprietor, old John Corlett, then snugly ensconced in his Kentish fastness, a serious letter on the subject of the gold currency. It was brief and to the point, and did not invite evasion; nevertheless, two days later came one of the familiar irregular scrawls—it was popularly believed in the printing works that John wrote most of his articles while running for the trains at Headcorn—which read as follows:

"Dear Pitcher,—I sold a pig in Maidstone market for £6. 10s 0d., the buyer being one Harris. If it is Billie Harris, get hold of a piece of it. It was a grand pig, fed on nothing but meal. Pigs sell well.—Yours, J. C."

But old John was ever a Napoleon of finance.

On one of his invasions of Holland, with poor Shirley Brooks,

while Shirley sat in his hotel jotting down notes for the paper, his editor and proprietor would sally forth mysteriously, and as darkly return. One morning "Blobbs" dogged his footsteps—out across the Grootmarket, under an ancient gateway, and into a little dark shop pervaded by a vinous smell. Here Master, with a holy calm on his face, was discovered sipping little Flemish glasses of Wynand Fockink's wonderful Curacao.

"It is but twopence a glass," explained the financial Napoleon, "and at Romano's would certainly cost ninepence. I have had four, and am still a penny in hand. And, bear this in mind, Shirley,"—John's favourite phrase—"a penny saved is a penny gained!"

And on his return to Fleet Street, Blobbs, in order to gain at least a glimmering of the meaning of economy, purchased, for office use, a second-hand copy of Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations."

XII

THINGS THEATRICAL

The Tale-Pitcher—Alfred Turner—Irving and the Property Master—Banner-bearing and Fried Fish—A Brigham Young Play—The Offending Limelight Man—Bernhardt's *Mot*—Tree and the Millionaire—" Beetle " and the Bishop—" Make-up as a Fine Art "—Gaby Deslys' Discovery—Tree's Dressing-Room—An Importunate Old Lady—The Kaiser's Tact—An Effort at Racing Nomenclature—" His Majesty's English "—Rehearsal Scenes—The " Over-Production " question—Mrs. Langtry and the Camellia—Lewis Waller—Spoofing Tree—Local Customs—The Finger-nail Habit—Charles Brookfield and the Leading Lady—Some Brookfield Comments—The Censorship Appointments—The Wilde Case—Sir Charles Hawtrey—A Good Play—The Lost Half-crown—Hawtrey as Producer—His Farewell—Sir George Alexander—Three Young Drapers—Biblical Names—Kennedy Jones' Racing Stable—Dwarf and Breakfast—Alexander and Gaiters—The Carmelite House Method—Only a Capitalist.

FEW men could tell a story better than Pitcher. Unlike so many who have achieved fame or detestation as semi-professional raconteurs, Pitch never made the mistakes of over-acting, or over-gesticulation. An intonation, a tiny movement of the hand, and his point was made. Another raconteur of a similar calibre is Alfred Turner, for so long the manager to Cyril Maude and to Beerbohm Tree, and an evening spent in listening to Pitcher and " Tubby," telling tales of the life and of the personalities they had known, each chuckling appreciatively at the others' dip into memory's storehouse, generally developed into a late night.

One pre-war night, long past the hour at which one should be in, not out of bed, I sat with some others listening to anecdotes of great actors and stories of professional intimacy, which both men told with an affection for the heroes of their yarns. And one little memory of Henry Irving as told by " Tubby " I would, however feebly, repeat in cold print.

It was on the eve of Irving's production of that dire failure " The Medicine Man," by Hichens and Traill, in which the great actor played the part of a moody misanthropist, whose only smiles were for the birds which filled the cage in his surgery. For some reason—or no reason—up to the final rehearsal, the

property master had not provided the cage which should have hung on the surgery wall. Irving had asked for it a dozen times, but it remained forgotten, and the last rehearsal started as cageless as its predecessors. Irving halted it abruptly at the point when the neglect of the property master became apparent. The ladies and gentlemen of the company he said, would adjourn to his room for a glass of sherry and a biscuit—the rehearsal had already lasted some hours—until a cage was fetched from one of the many bird-shops in Seven Dials.

Some twenty minutes later a perspiring property-master hung a brand-new breeding cage on its nail, and it was a distinctly relieved company that, as it filed back into its positions, noted the presence of the missing property; yet when the Chief came once more to the oft-postponed soliloquy: "Come, come, my little feathered friends," and lifted the cage door from its place, once more he stopped dead.

"Absurd, absurd," he muttered; "too new—too clean—too tidy. Don't you know, my man, that I am supposed to have been rearing birds in this cage for many, many years? See to it—see to it,— quickly, too!"

In a corner, behind the backcloth, stood a bucket of white-wash. Holding the bright and shining cage in his left hand, with his right the agonised property-master grabbed a No. 3 housepainter's ceiling brush, and stirred it savagely round the bucket. Six great sploshes of white-wash fell in as many seconds upon the offending birds' house.

Still Irving refused to be satisfied.

"Stay! Stay!" he jerked sardonically, "worse and worse! 'Twas canaries I bred, my man, canaries—*not eagles*!"

With that he stalked once more to his room, and once more did the detested notice-board just inside the Lyceum stage-door bear the sheet of white paper with the too-familiar legend: "Everybody at 11.0."

And this story promptly led to another of the great tragedian, who took a personal interest not only in the actors of his house but in the supernumeraries as well, and was pleased to be at the pains of remembering little domestic happenings concerning the individual welfare and prosperity of each, and of chatting with them on such topics.

"Ah, Simpson," he said once, to a lantern-jawed banner-bearer, on returning to the Lyceum from a provincial tour, and

marshalling his stage forces; "this will be our twentieth season together, eh?"

"Yes, Sir Henry," replied the pleased Simpson.

"Ah! And how is it with your other enterprise,—your famed fish-supper bar in Walworth?"

"Not so well, Sir Henry. Ye see, we live a mile or more away, in Camberwell, an' my wife's had to neglect the shop a bit lately through havin' twins."

"That's bad—that's bad!" answered Irving sympathetically. Then, as though he had received information from the flies, he added, more cheerfully: "I have it, Simpson; I have it! Keep your shop open later, and attend it. Sell more fish, Simpson—yais, yais, *sell more fish*!"

The stories of Irving's princely generosity are endless.

No one will ever know the extent of his private salary-list—the list of the super-annuated, unlucky, unfortunate, and even worthless, whom he helped regularly,—and in his dealings with folk of talent and genius he revelled in giving what he estimated as the value of their work. Mr. Derwent Wood, R.A., at a Garrick Club dinner some little time ago, told some typical stories of Henry Irving's appreciative open-handedness.

The sculptor's first London commission was given him by the great actor, who sent for him one day, and demanded curtly:

"I hear you can make things. Is it true?"

"Yes," said the budding Academician with the confidence of youth.

The great revival of "Henry VIII" was on the eve of production, and Irving wished for croziers, Cardinals' mitres and other things.

"They must be historically accurate," he commanded briefly, and then added, typically, "don't trouble about the expense."

The commission was executed, and, the properties delivered, the sculptor attended in person to hear the Chief's verdict on them.

Irving was rehearsing at the time, and talked for a few minutes in the wings.

"What is your bill?" he asked abruptly.

"Twenty-five pounds," replied the artist.

"Twenty-five pounds. Ridiculous! Impossible!" snapped Irving, and called for the faithful Bram Stoker. "Make out a cheque for this young man for £50," he commanded. This

Photograph : W. D. Downey

SIR HENRY IRVING AS "WOLSEY"

was done, and, as Derwent Wood adds drily as he tells the story,—" I soon cashed it ! "

The owner of a bitter tongue, it cannot be denied that at times Irving wounded susceptible souls deeply when his sardonic humour got the better of him. But he could make generous amends.

A martinet in his theatre—a complete autocracy was the only possible system for the Lyceum of his day—he could relax his severe discipline when he saw the need.

During the rehearsal of one of the big productions, Irving had reduced Fuller Mellish—a highly strung and intensely temperamental man—to a nervous wreck by his biting criticisms. Twenty times a scene was rehearsed; Irving more sarcastically dissatisfied than ever, and Mellish on the verge of hysteria. At the end of the rehearsal, his nerves in rags, and tears of rage in his eyes, Mellish sought Irving's room and for ten good minutes stormed and raged. " Cruel old swine ! " was a term of endearment compared with some of the other epithets he flung at the " Chief."

" What's the matter—what's the matter ? " jerked Irving. " There—there—you'll soon be all right ! "

When Mellish had gone, Irving summoned Loveday, his manager.

" Eh—Loveday—eh ? " he snapped interrogatively, " what would you do with a scoundrel who burst in here and called me a—er—a ' damned cruel old swine '—eh ? "

" Sack him," replied Loveday promptly.

" Well, well, I don't know—I don't know "; mused Irving, "—but you can raise Mr. Mellish's salary—yes, raise it £5 a week."

Irving had a sardonic humour of his own, and I recollect him telling a story of the drama at Cripple Creek, or some Bret Hartish locality, which he heard on his last American tour. The favourite play was one called " Brigham Young and his Five-and-Forty Wives." The great scene showed the stage filled with a huge bed into which, as the curtain was about to fall, the five-and-forty retired, fighting for the best position.

" And I—er—I wonder," Irving would conclude thoughtfully, " that Mr.—er—Blank has never thought of producing it in London, with—er—yes ! with himself as the prophet ! "

The first few visits behind the scenes invariably bring a sense of disillusionment to the enthusiastic young playgoer, and it

was a visit behind the scenes during a Lyceum dress-rehearsal—a rare privilege that was not properly appreciated at the time—that gave a mild shock to a young Irving devotee.

The great actor himself brought him down to the stage from the dressing-room, posted him in a safe place whence to observe proceedings without being in the way, and stood for a moment chatting in that kindly, courtly fashion which was Irving's peculiar gift.

Suddenly something went wrong: a light far above our heads flickered and jumped in crazy fashion, and Irving, dressed for his part as Archbishop Becket, paused in his conversation and glanced swiftly upwards.

Then the saintly head was raised, and from the saintly lips issued a few terse remarks to the offending lime-light man, couched in language peculiarly calculated to appeal to offending lime-light men. The little *affaire* concluded, he turned, and with a gracious smile resumed the interrupted conversation.

The momentary disillusionment was compensated for by the piquancy of the combination of stately prince of the church, and the practical,—very practical—employer of labour.

Curiously enough, my fellow "Pink 'Un," Horace Lennard, suffered a similar momentary disillusionment on his first interview with Sara Bernhardt.

The divine one was giving a season at one of Edwardes' theatres, and Lennard went to see her on some matter of business. An immense admirer of her art, he looked forward with interest to gazing into those wonderful eyes and listening to that velvety "*voix d'or*" at close quarters.

But something had gone wrong, and, as he entered Sara's dressing-room, the first word he heard in that golden voice was the *mot de Cambronne*.

Irving in the rôle of contributor to a sporting journal on a highly technical racing topic will be new to most people, and even into this part he contrived to infuse a little sardonic humour.

A circular which aroused great interest at the time by reason of the replies it evoked was one Corlett addressed in 1886 to many members of the Jockey Club, owners, trainers and others whose opinions he considered of value, requesting them to fill up a form giving, in their opinion, the names of the ten best horses of the century.

Even at this day, one or two of the replies are worth quoting.

The Duke of Portland, for instance, in his reply gave Plenipo, Flying Dutchman, West Australian, Crucifix, Thormanby, Gladiateur, Galopin, Wheel of Fortune, St. Simon, Plaisanterie, with St. Simon as " absolutely the best horse."

Lord Falmouth's list contained Plenipotentiary, Bay Middleton, Priam, West Australian, Flying Dutchman, Surplice, Harkaway, Touchstone, Cremorne, Gladiateur.

Lord Rossmore selected Barcaldine, Isonomy, Plaisanterie, Cremorne, Foxhall, Robert the Devil, St. Simon, Melton, Ormonde, Seaman, with Barcaldine as the " absolute best."

The Rt. Hon. Henry Chaplin chose Blair Athol, Cremorne, Hermit, Achievement, Ormonde (" if he can stay "), St. Simon, West Australian, Crucifix, Blink Bonny, of the older ones. Absolutely the best—St. Simon.

John Porter gave Teddington, Virago, West Australian, Fisherman, Gladiateur, Rosicrucian, Isonomy, Robert the Devil, St. Simon, Foxhall. Absolutely the best horse, Isonomy. His comment was : " The above are within my own knowledge."

Mat Dawson's list was Touchstone, Flying Dutchman, Voltigeur, Stockwell, West Australian, Thormanby, Blair Athol, Gladiateur, St. Simon, Ormonde.

Judge Clark judged West Australian, Stockwell, Teddington, Flying Dutchman, St. Simon, Gladiateur, Bay Middleton, Wheel of Fortune, Isonomy, Crucifix, with Bay Middleton best.

Of the jockeys who contributed, Fordham's list is interesting : West Australian, Virago, Blink Bonny, Nutbush, Cremorne, Gladiateur, Sterling, Bend Or, St. Simon, Melton, with St. Simon as the best.

By way of contrast, Lal Brough contributed his opinion : Thespis, Sock and Buskin, Good Engagement, Salary, Ready Money, Applause, Old Comedy, Long Run, Good Actor, Oof Bird, with British Public as the absolute best. And Henry Irving wrote at some little length.

" My knowledge of horses is extremely limited," he confessed, " being chiefly confined to ' dead 'uns ' drawn in sweeps. I send you, however, a few Lyceum favourites :

1 and 2. Two horses, names unknown, in ' The Lyons Mail.'
3 and 4. Two horses, names unknown, in ' Jingle.'

If blood be the qualification, these four should be the first, for they remind me of the story of the Irish carman, who, when

asked if his horse was a blood horse, said: 'Yes, it was the bloodiest horse in the country.'

5. The Jew's horse in 'The Bells.' I believe him to be all right, for he was made and still is on the premises.
6. 'White Surrey.'
7 and 8. Two horses in the possession of Mephistopheles; but, as they have been waiting 'in the chill morning air' since December last, and are likely to wait a good deal longer, they are probably not in the best condition.
9. A clothes horse.
10. The only other horse I know is The Winning Horse. This mount I like for myself—when I can get it."

The lists of horses and the names of senders are interesting even in these days.

The opinions given comprised those of Lord Falmouth, the Duke of Portland, Mr. Chaplin, Lord Strafford, Lord Suffolk, Sir Francis Doyle, Count Lehndorff, Colonel Forester, Sir George Wombwell, Mr. Leopold de Rothschild, Lord Greville, Lord Bradford, Sir H. Gregory, together with nearly all the leading trainers, and were eminently representative.

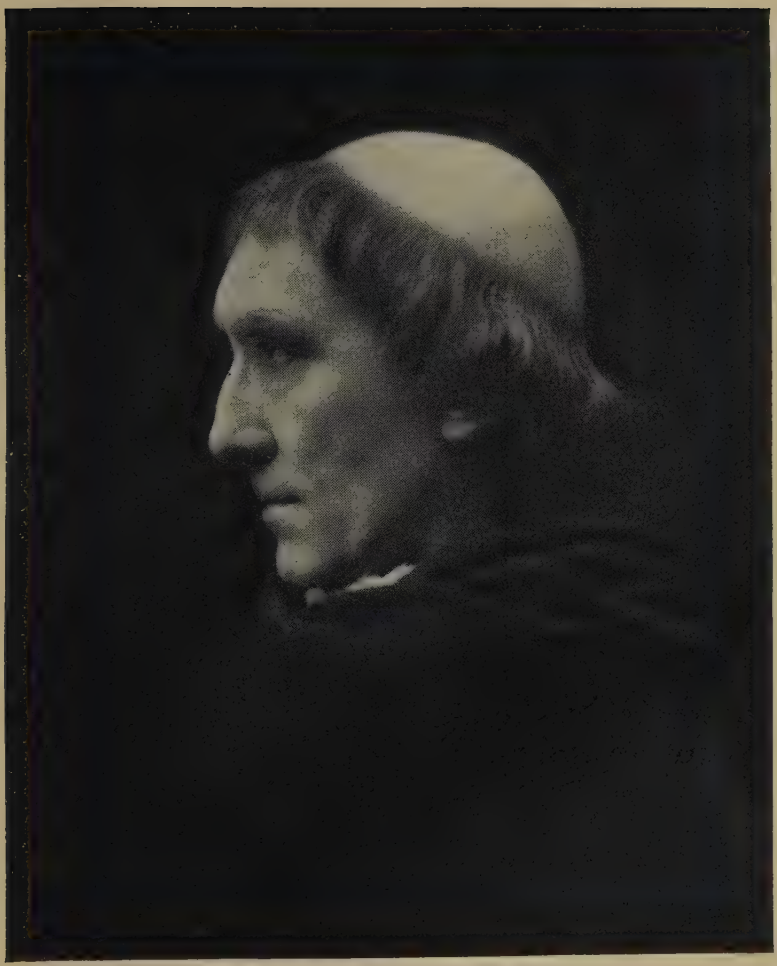
Probably if the circular had been issued at a later period, Ormonde would have occupied a higher position, but the ten horses at the head of the lists were Gladiateur, West Australian, Isonomy, St. Simon, Blair Athol, Flying Dutchman, St. Gatien, Virago, Ormonde, and Robert the Devil.

In old John's words: "they are a glorious ten."

The results of a similar competition at the present day would be interesting, and it would not be the least interesting feature of such a competition to see how "the glorious ten" figure in the pedigrees of the new list.

Tree's connection with racing was something more than remote, but he chuckled when I told him of an effort at nomenclature by Fred Lynham.

Many years ago, the Duke of Portland set a fashion by naming a colt after a novelist hero—Donovan—and the custom lapsed until Lynham called a colt (that had disappointed him at Doncaster) Asticot. In Locke's "The Beloved Vagabond," which Tree was then doing at His Majesty's, Asticot was the "ugly, dirty, rickety, undersized, underfed urchin" who read "Para-



SIR HENRY IRVING AS "BECKET"

dise Lost," longed to own a fried-fish shop, and was sold body and soul by his drunken mother for half-a-crown.

Hundreds of good stories centred about Tree—the "Tree story" became a *cliché*—and some of them were true. Here is a true one.

They had scarcely met since their school-days, though the fame of each had reached the other's ears, till one day, as the actor-knight turned the corner of the Haymarket, his arm was seized by the millionaire. Pausing for a moment in his flood of boyish reminiscences, the man of money stepped back a pace and gazed admiringly at his old friend.

"But how well you look, Herbert! How splendidly well!"

"Do I?" murmured Tree. "Delightful. But come to the Carlton and let us lunch."

Lunch over, the great actor gazed dreamily at his friend.

"Tell me," he demanded, with sudden interest, "tell me how you, who were always so dull, so backward, as a boy, have achieved success. I hear your name everywhere: you have exhausted fame; there is nothing left for you but to endow libraries."

The millionaire bent forward.

"Herbert," he whispered, "I will tell you. I owe everything I possess to tact; everything, even to this excellent lunch you have just given me. I knew, when I saw you, that you were feeling tired and seedy. I accused you off robust health; you were pleased, and invited me to lunch. Tact provides everything, and a really tactful sparrow need not starve, even in a wilderness of motor-cars."

How Tree loved a phrase. I remember once, on the eve of the production of Stephen Phillips' "Faust" at His Majesty's, someone ventured a dressing-room criticism on what he called "a common or garden Mephistopheles." Tree's eyes danced mischievously.

"Common or garden?" he repeated quizzically. "No—no. Covent or Garden, Covent or Garden."

To Americans and others who are full of reasons for making Great Britain dry, may be commended the story Tree was fond of telling of his attempt to deprive "Beetle" Kemble of his port. (By the way, I wonder how many of the glib paragraphists of the day ever dared to call the stately old gentleman "Beetle" to his face?)

Kemble heard him out in all solemnity, and then had his say.

from all angles. And from the mirrors, in place of the blonde, somewhat ascetic face of a few minutes ago, leered Du Maurier's lascivious Jew.

It was when Tree was playing in "David Copperfield," that poor little golden-haired Gaby Deslys, to whom Dickens was a sealed book, watched the play carefully. After Sir Herbert had done several lightning changes, from Micawber to Peggotty, and from Peggotty back to Micawber, a sudden understanding of the position came to the little French actress. She clapped her hands with delight.

"*Enfin*! I see!" she cried. "Sir 'Erbert, 'e is living ze double life!"

When on the sale of the paper to De Wend Fenton, a little band of the old "Pink 'Uns" determined to set up a journal for themselves, Tree was a good friend to us from the start. He knew us all, and the adventure amused him immensely, for he had a boyish love of adventure. There was, in fact, something essentially boyish about his outlook on life, and, on his last American tour, one who was with him wrote home:

"This boy of over sixty will be the death of me. He keeps me up till three in the morning, whirls me off for a long motor drive after breakfast, plays a matinée and an evening performance, insists on a supper party and keeps me up again till three. And you feel you can't tear yourself away. It's like living in a bath of intellectual champagne."

He had that rare possession—a personality. Everyone unconsciously imitated Tree, when telling a Tree story; in fact, Herman Finck used to claim distinction on the ground that he was the only man in London who had never imitated Tree. And after seeing the best imitator of them all—poor Arthur Playfair, in the "Pygmalion" parody at the Palace—the actor-manager tried hard to get him to play the part in the real "Pygmalion" at His Majesty's.

Tree had not a small mind.

Some of us thought it would be great fun if he could be induced to write us a heart-to-heart criticism of his own production, "Drake," in which he did not appear, and I asked him to do so.

The joke tickled him enormously, and for a moment he hesitated, then he sighed.

"No, no," and he shook his head, "there are too many geese in the world."

Every night of his life he held a sort of continuous reception in the long ante-room to his actual dressing-room. All kinds of people seemed to wander in, with all kinds of suggestions, compliments and requests, and Tree, in his stage-costume, wandered amongst them, smiling, witty, chaffing, abstruse. I have seen a little Japanese artist squatting on the floor as he handed round his wonderful drawings for inspection, while Joe Carr declaimed on art and Dickens, and polite unknowns flitted in and out: Dana—"Where's Dana! Fetch Dana! I must see Dana!"—abrupt, businesslike, gave or received news; a Jewish financier smiled inscrutably; a slim, grave-eyed exquisite, who was Max Beerbohm, surveyed the tohu-bohu, and Tree, made up as Malvolio, posed occasionally for the drawing for the souvenir. Then the voice of the call-boy:

"Mr. Tree, *please*!"

and the actor walked on to the stage.

And then—I think it was a little trick of his in which he found amusement—his scene finished, he would glide back into his dressing-room, and pick up the conversational thread precisely where he had dropped it.

Once upon a time, among the people who used to lie in wait for him with impossible requests was a strange old lady, whose chief apparent claims to notice were that she was heavily moustached, had an incipient whisker, and had written an impossible play. At last even Tree tired of her importunity, and when she called at the stage entrance, he invariably left by the front of the theatre. In time the old lady detected the ruse, and one bright May morning as the actor descended the stairs leading into the hall of his beautiful theatre, he found his *bête noire* firmly seated in a chair by the box office, waiting grimly. Before he could bolt he was buttoned-holed. When at last, with profuse explanations, wild promises, and nervous protests, he managed to get rid of her, he turned to his box-office keeper in royal fury:

"Will no one protect me?" he stormed. "Am I to be assaulted in the hall of my beautiful theatre by females who—who—who grow hair in the most *impossible* places?"

On his return from his command visit to Berlin Tree had several good stories to tell, and, frankly, was not impressed by the Germans and their "Kultur."

At the close of a State performance the Kaiser sent for him, and with the delicacy and tact which distinguished that

monarch, assured the actor that in spite of not feeling at all well, he was glad that he had come, as the performance had revived his spirits.

" As the play was ' Richard II,' " mused Tree, " one can only dimly conjecture the power of Hamlet as a spirit-raiser."

Many stories have been told of his methods at rehearsal, and of his sensitiveness to little *gaucheries* in the pronunciation of the language.

During the reading of a play to His Majesty's company Tree paused, and fixing a possible offender with a pale blue eye :

" By the way," he murmured blandly, " the author wishes me to ask all you ladies and gentlemen—all—to speak the King's English ; *not* His Majesty's."

One otherwise excellent actress had a pernicious little trick of invariably pronouncing the word " children " as " cheeldrun " and Tree tried desperately to cure her.

" No ! No ! " he interrupted ; " say it like a woman talking—' children ' ! "

She tried again, and again produced " cheeldrun."

" No,—no,—no ! " cried Tree, " ' children ' ! ' Cheeldrun ' is the illegitimate plural of ' cheeild ' ! "

At another rehearsal Tree tried hard to induce an actor to speak up.

" Speak louder, my dear fellow ! " he cried at last. " I can't hear you. You must remember you're not a star yet, and people want to hear *you*. Only stars can afford to be inaudible. You're not rich and famous yet, you know."

" No," retorted the actor grimly, " I've not been able to save much since I've been here ! "

When Tree produced " The Merchant of Venice " he searched the East End for suitable " crowds," and in the Ghetto at His Majesty's one saw all types of the chosen people, who were paid two shillings a night for their appearance. In this scene, the Christians pretended to spit at the Jews. But one of the latter was a realist, and, after the first night, interviewed Tree.

" Make it a round guinea a week, guv'nor," he pleaded, " an' those —— Christians may *really* spit at me."

On his last American visit Tree was discussing nationalities with an American.

" Yep," said the pushful Yank—America was not as yet in the war—" it's get on or get under with us, or as you Britishers say, ' it's deeds, not words, that count.' "

"My friend," said Tree impressively, "have you ever sent a telegram?"

The many errors that creep into the film—an American film of English country house life will ever stick in my memory—pass unnoticed, or perhaps it is that we are becoming less critical, but a slip of Tree's advertisement manager once brought unmerciful chaff.

When Tree produced "Julius Cæsar," and, incidentally, put His Majesty's on its financial legs, the bill bore a replica of a Roman coin showing Cæsar's profile and the date "B.C. 47." And it cannot be denied that "B.C. 47" showed commendable foresight on the part of the Roman mint of the period.

The sneers of the critics at the alleged "over-production" of the schools of Irving and Tree notwithstanding, it is the inefficient, beer-eating, property-master of the small provincial theatre who is the real bane of the histrion.

Once Mrs. Langtry was playing "Camille," and had got well into the principal scene, when she noticed that the white camellia which she had to present to her lover was not on the table. As she passed the wings, she hissed a burning order for a flower, even a *leaf*, of any sort; and got it.

"Take this flower, Armand," she cooed, "it is a rare blossom—pale, scentless, cold, but sensitive as Purity itself. Cherish it, and its beauty will excel the loveliest flower that grows; but wound it with a single touch and you shall never recall its bloom or wipe away the stain!"

And she handed to him—half a stick of celery which the gasman had been nibbling with his bread and cheese!

Elaborate theatrical "effects"—the stage tricks by which modern drama is invested with a sense of realism—it is true, occasionally run amok.

For instance, on the production of "The Garden of Allah" in New York, with poor Lewis Waller in the leading role, the much-advertised sandstorm lost its bearings, and, instead of sweeping the desert, took in the first half-dozen rows of stalls, and, incidentally, the stage-carpenter whose business it was to tame and ride the whirlwind and turn it in the right direction.

Now, the sandstorm effect was got by blowing large quantities of corn meal and bran through great tin tubes, and on this occasion one of the feed-pipes became disjointed, and started playing corn chandlers' shops with an evening-dressed audience that had paid to mingle with Art,—not breakfast foods.

Dicko, the sandstorm tamer, jumped up a wing ladder to adjust the faulty feed-pipe, when a blast of cereals took him between the eyes, filling his features with grain and felling him to the floor below.

Then, while the rebellious big tin horn poured Quaker's Oats and Grape Nuts over the snowy shoulders and sable suits of the mighty " in front," Dicko finally rolled over in a choking fit in the wings, and the stage-manager, cursing the flying flour, rang down the curtain. Willing hands raised the carpenter to a sitting position, in a pit of crushed oats, just as Hugh Ford, Liebler's general manager, rushed on, and in alarm asked the granulated and wheat-sprinkled stage hand if there was anything he could do for him.

" Hully gee, yes ! " gasped Dicko, " pour a gallon o' cream over me, an' complete the illusion ! "

Say what you like about the *régime* of the actor-managers, some mighty curious people have replaced them.

At a West End Theatre a rather autocratic war-time impresario had a habit of taking a hand in the box-office —for his personal and private amusement; perhaps it was the idea of handling real money that appealed to him —and his manner, to say the least of it, was not ingratiating.

" I consider you have been abominably rude ! " angrily exclaimed a portly dame who had been having some trouble over her seats, " and I shall make a point of writing to complain about you ! "

The face at the window grinned sardonically.

" Who are you goin' to write to ? " sneered the face's owner. " Gawd ? "

It was during the run of " Pygmalion " that at a big function a well-known editor button-holed Tree.

" I have something important to tell you," he said gravely. " It's not quite pleasant, but you ought to know it. A great friend of mine, a rural dean, who is a staunch admirer of yours, came to me this morning in a dreadful state. ' Ever since Tree built His Majesty's,' he said, ' I've been to see his plays whenever I came to town. I have faced the criticism of people who say that rural deans ought not to go to theatres, out of sheer admiration for his art; but imagine my feelings when, from the stage of what I have always regarded as the first theatre in the country, I heard that *awful* word. I'm angry, hurt, disgusted

—words fail to express my indignation. It—it is perfectly *bloody*!' "

Tree was not an easy man to score off. Still chuckling, he grasped the hoaxer by the arm, marched him into the middle of a group of ladies, and made him tell the whole story again, and not until *the* word had been used did he release his blushing victim.

Tree was once invited by Will Crooks to visit a Council School in a poverty-stricken district, and to give a reading from "Julius Cæsar," and a little address on Roman history. The actor was greatly struck by the intelligent attention of the youngsters, and as he and the M.P. came away together, he observed thoughtfully:

"So keen; so sharp! In these terrible surroundings! How do you account for it?"

"Local custom, Sir Herbert!" announced Crooks promptly. "In this district their mothers always wean 'em on mixed pickles!"

And Tree was ever interested in local customs.

One beautiful June morning he stood on the steps of his beautiful theatre listening critically to the prattle of the drivers of two taxis which had collided in full Haymarket.

"No, no," he mused, turning on his heel, "these things should be done with distinction—like—like Dukes picking their teeth."

His restiveness under a long run was notorious—an obstinate commercial success often made him artistically unhappy—and one evening in his dressing-room he grew more bitter than usual over the system which necessitated a long run for purely financial reasons.

"And there are other dangers than artistic ones connected with the long run," he mused; "the public should be considered—even the least worthy members of the public. Only the other evening Charles Frohman told me a terrible story of a Napoleon of finance who, some years ago, one Boxing Night, was arrested between the acts of 'Peter Pan' at the Duke of York's Theatre. Seven long years passed, and on the evening of his release, for old time's sake he wandered up St. Martin's Lane.

"'Good God!' he cried, as his eye rested on the bills of the eighth revival of Barrie's piece, 'seven years ago, and this damned thing's running still!'"

Tree's ideas on finance were notoriously vague, and were

notably evidenced during the erection of the theatre he adored.

There was a sort of half-hearted strike among the masons and bricklayers during the building of His Majesty's Theatre, and one morning as Tree was gazing beatifically at the rapidly rising structure, two or three ring-leaders approached him personally on the matter.

"Mister Tree, sir," blustered the leader, "we want another ha'penny; an', what's more, we ain't a goin' on till we gets another ha'penny. Not another brick goes up till we gets it!"

Sorely perplexed, the great actor-manager, who in his dreams was anything but commercial, fumbled vainly in his pockets, then murmured wearily:

"Yes, yes, but I have no change! come across with me to the Haymarket Theatre."

Across the road the group passed, the workmen scarcely knowing why. Then, as though casting from his shoulders, like the hero of "The Pilgrim's Progress," a fardel of troubles, Tree went straight to the box-office, and said to the gentleman within:

"Mr. Leverton, these splendid fellows can't go on with their work until they have another ha'penny. Oh, please, please give them one penny—no!—give them *twopence* a-piece, and let them get on with my beautiful theatre!"

And some years later, when that beautiful theatre was in imminent danger owing to the fire at the Carlton next door, in which lives were lost, another personality stood in the Haymarket well nigh as anxious for its safety as Tree. In the front row of the crowd was "Wiggy" Clarkson,—"le premier perruquier du monde,"—and ever and anon his anxious gaze strayed from the actual flames to the seemingly-doomed theatre at the north-east corner of the great block of buildings. For "Wiggy" knew that eight thousand pounds' worth of scenery and costumes for "Macbeth" had just been taken into His Majesty's and now seemed destined to destruction.

Part of the hotel roof collapsed, and, amid a shower of sparks, great golden tongues of flame shot up in the night sky.

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed "Wiggy" loudly; and indignant listeners turned to stare, momentarily contemplating lynching him for his callousness. "*Thank Heaven! that I am late with the wigs!*"

Like Tree, Clarkson from time—well, not quite immemorial,

but, say, for some years—has been the *raison d'etre* of many stories, and one of the best was one Willie Wilde used to tell.

Clarkson was at Windsor attending to the royal head-dresses in the days of Queen Victoria, when one of the Princesses summoned him to her room on hair business. As he left, in the corridor he met the Queen, and, strictly according to Willie Wilde, blushed scarlet, exclaiming nervously in the best Clarksonian French:

"Honny soit qui mally pence, Your Majesty!"

But in the matter of wigs the perruquier once got his own back, even with Tree.

With a furious gesture the actor stopped a dress rehearsal and, pointing with outstretched arm at the beautiful Maud Jeffreys, cried fiercely:

"Look at her! Look at her! Where's the wig man? Where's Clarkson?"

A little voice from the gloom at the back of the dress circle answered, and the owner of the voice was summoned to the stage.

"Look at Miss Jeffreys!" wailed Tree. "Look at her hair! But of course you wouldn't understand hair; you are only a wig maker. I wanted a wig; a wonderful, scarlet wig—something to look like hair; hair—the stuff that grows on the head—but how should *you* know what hair is?"

"Really, really, Mr. Tree!" protested "Wiggy" excitedly, "it's not my fault, it really isn't! I made her a beautiful wig, —a wonderful wig,—but she wouldn't wear it; She *would* wear her own hair!"

And talking of "le meilleur perruquier du monde," as Sara advertised him, it is a fact that some years ago the rickshaw men in Ceylon actually preferred the Clarkson sovereign to the genuine article. For advertising purposes "Wiggy" had produced a gilt cardboard disc, bearing the head of King Edward VII on one side, and the head of Wardour Street on the other.

"You've got a fairish cheek, Willie," said the candid friend, as he examined the production, "putting your head on the back of a cardboard sovereign."

"On the *back*!" protested "le meilleur perruquier, etc.," snatching the disc anxiously. "Why, my *dear* boy, can't you see it's on the *front*?"

As to Tree's care in make-up, Clarkson had a good story of the actor's Japanese, Zakkuri, in "The Darling of the Gods."

Tree had even gone to the length of a double set of long celluloid finger-nails to simulate the aristocratic nails of a Japanese Minister of the period—and not until two costly sets had been ruined did the dresser realise that the great actor had never got out of the boyish and nervous habit of biting his finger-nails in moments of abstraction!

In that same play Tree, as the wicked Japanese Marquis, was followed throughout by a "shadow" in the form of a dwarf, dressed in a replica of the great man's stage costume, which character appeared on the programme as "It."

"Why is your shadow called 'It'?" asked someone.

"Because his name is Bertie," replied Tree vaguely.

One of the non-Shakespearean successes at His Majesty's was "Joseph and His Brethren," but it did not please all tastes.

For instance, there was the man who had just landed in London after years in the Shiny, and was looking forward to the lighter side of things. Asked how he was enjoying himself, he replied diffidently:

"Well, on Thursday I was taken to 'Joseph and His Brethren,' and last night I was roped in to 'The Woman of Samaria' at the Coliseum, and to-night I'm going to see Gaby Deslys' show. I on'y hope to heaven *that's* not another Bible Class!"

It wasn't.

On the morning after the production of "Joseph and His Brethren," in which real camels, oxen and sheep wandered across the stage of His Majesty's to the admiration of the multitude, Sir Herbert met Charles Brookfield and a friend in the Haymarket.

"Oh, Brookfield," cried Tree reproachfully, "you did not come last night to see my beautiful play. Why not?"

"I was dining with some friends," replied Brookfield, "but as I passed through Charles Street about eleven I saw your leading lady leave the stage-door, and a great crowd cheer her as she walked slowly away, bowing her acknowledgements right and left."

"Ah, Miss Elliott is a charming woman—charming—" and still pondering her charm and enchantment Tree hailed a passing taxi.

"I wasn't referring to Miss Elliott at all," complained Brookfield pettishly to his friend as Tree drove off, "I was talking of

SIR HERBERT TREE AS "SVENGALI"
Caricature by J. B. Booth

the old dromedary from Hale's livery stables—but Tree is always so absurdly impetuous ! "

And, while on the subject of " Joseph and His Brethren," it was the London correspondent of a Melbourne paper who, in recording his impressions of the play, observed of Miss Maxine Elliott :

" She is in ' Joseph and His Brethren,' playing the part of the wife of Potiphar—probably the only man in all Egypt who NEVER got at the truth of that historic scandal."

Charles Brookfield was a mine of good stories, and one of his favourites was of an early experience with the imperturbable " Bill " Leverton, in the post in which the latter still reigns at the Haymarket Theatre.

Poor Brookie was running a dreadful season at the theatre and, more out of habit than of hope, asked casually :

" How's the booking, Leverton ? "

" Well, Bond Street's looking healthier," replied the optimist gravely ; " there are two balconies booked for Thursday."

At the time of Brookfield's appointment to the censorship it was pretty freely stated that the appointment was due to the fact that he and " Bobby " Spencer had been friends at Cambridge. As a matter of fact, " Bobby " didn't know anything about it, and was very much embarrassed at the office's choice.

Brookfield could never resist the temptation of a " mot," and one of his last was made in the Pall Mall restaurant, *à propos* an appearance of the divine Sara in London.

" A wonderful woman ! A wonderful woman ! " he repeated enthusiastically. " She's actually playing Joan of Arc to-night —and it is a moral certainty that she'll be back again next year playing Joan of Noah's Ark ! "

Particularly neat was his comment on a *cause célèbre* that was shocking the town.

" There is nothing to be said for them," said Brookie sadly, as he discussed the case. " There is no possible excuse. The guilty pair were discovered by the husband in what the lawyers term ' flagrant delight.' "

To the fact that mere sordid " houses of call " are unmentionable in polite society was due the invention of a mild little piece of evasion.

" If anyone asks for me," he would say to the stage-door-keeper of the Haymarket, " I have gone to St. One's."

" St. One's " pronounced differently, was Stone's, the famous old chop-house in Panton Street.

Poor Charles Brookfield was nearly killed by his promotion to the office of Censor. The London climate affected his lungs adversely and he was forced constantly to retreat to his house on the Cotswold Hills, near Bath. People who did not know him, but only heard or read of his acidulated wit, got a wrong idea of the man. He was a very kindly soul, and when he said a cruel thing about anyone the manner of the saying took much of the sting out—which was not the case when it was repeated by another mouth.

He laughed at his serious illness, as he laughed at everything else in life, and returning to town, after one of his sojourns in the sanatorium, he announced himself to his little circle in the Pall Mall restaurant as : "Snatched from the burning ; B. Tour."

He was a really fine amateur detective—the exercise of his wits interested him, and he assisted the police *con amore* in their campaign against one particular kind of vice,—and was a bitter enemy to all snobbery and " swank," the most savage things he ever said being addressed to men who, he thought, were " putting on side."

It was on Charlie Brookfield's very last appearance in town that, after nodding to an acquaintance in the Haymarket, he turned to his companion with a sigh :

" There goes a man who has done more than his share for the drama," he observed.

" How ? "

" He never wrote a play."

It was in Tree's dressing-room that I first met Sir Charles Hawtrey, who had looked in to discuss some charity matinee. Hawtrey, with his bland man-about-town air, his touch of being a simple, idle, pleasure-loving sort of individual, who only dabbled in his profession, was the idol of the young men about town of his day. He never " looked like an actor," but no man took his art more seriously. To see Hawtrey light a cigarette, or walk across the stage, was a lesson in the art of acting.

It looked so easy when Hawtrey did it. " What I like about Hawtrey is that he never ' acts ' ; he's so natural," was the frequent comment of the uninitiated, and the result was, perhaps, that his consummate technique was not generally appreciated.

Curiously enough, Tree and he had been first associated with

one another in his first great financial success, "The Private Secretary." Hawtrey was at a loose end when a friend took him a translation of "Der Bibliotheker" with the suggestion that it might make an amusing farce. He read it, turned the librarian into a curate, and produced it at Cambridge on November 4th, 1883, and then took it to Oxford. In both towns it was a success; he decided to seek a London theatre for it, and ultimately persuaded Edgar Bruce to present it. Hawtrey appeared as Douglas Cattermole, while Tree, of course, played the Rev. Robert Spalding, and, observed Hawtrey that evening in my presence,—"You never played better, my dear Tree."

Tree chuckled.

"Oh, I don't say it was a good play," protested Hawtrey blandly, "but—" wistfully—"I wish to heaven someone would bring me another as good!"

And as to its "goodness," the late Mr. Charles Merry put £500 into it, and drew £10,500.

In his stage career, Hawtrey must have earned hundreds of thousands, yet all his life he was unashamedly hard-up, but perfectly cheerful over it, and quite honestly thought that the next greatest pleasure in life to backing a winner was backing a loser.

"When I was a schoolboy of ten," he once told a friend, "I lost half-a-crown at a small race-meeting. Ever since then I've been trying to get it back, and the effort must have cost me half-a-million."

And when he was knighted, to a friend who approached with the usual congratulations, he remarked with a wistful smile:

"Thanks. At least no one will be able to say that I've bought the title!"

Hawtrey had an amusing little yarn about misplaced advertisement during the run of one of his successes, "Never Say Die."

A conscientious bill-sticker, with orders to placard the suburbs, footslogged wearily over Hampstead Heath on his mission to spread the good tidings of the happenings in the square mile of London that matters. After plodding for hours, he found what seemed a likely pitch,—a noble hoarding fronting a pair of handsome gates which opened on to the drive of some great estate. In five minutes the work was done.

The artist eats appreciation, no matter from what source, therefore when a funeral cortege drew up and the chief mourner

descended to inspect his work, he felt flattered, but only momentarily—for, purple with indignant fury, the sable-clad person called an adjacent constable and gave the publicist in charge for a wanton outrage on the feelings of the bereaved, and also for crabbing the financial prospects of Hendon Cemetery with

"NEVER SAY DIE!"

It is a curious fact that all the expert knowledge, all the care in the world, do not seem able to prevent the really awful line, the line that shouts for trouble, getting past the final rehearsal. I remember a particularly healthy specimen that blossomed on the first night—and on the first night only—of a production by no less a master of the game than Charles Hawtrey.

A door banged "off."

"There she is!" cried the confidante on the stage. "She'll be here directly. She has just gone to the end of the passage."

There was just one second's incredulous silence, and then—! Wow!

As a producer, Hawtrey, of course, was a genius. He never shouted, he never ranted, he never bullied; he was a complete martinet, yet a martinet who ruled by charm, for he never allowed it to be forgotten that he was an aristocrat—the arms of the Hawtreys can still be seen at Chequers, which, centuries ago, was the family seat—but he was not a snob. He had the grand manner, when he chose, but it was innate. Socially, he had the entrée to certain exclusive circles by right; he had not had to earn it by professional success, with the result that there was an utter and refreshing absence of "side" about him—in which he differed strongly from certain other members of his profession.

Someone once described him as a Mr. Micawber, who was never a failure and never had to wait long for something to turn up, but, apt as the description was, it missed the patrician element in his character.

As on the Monday night he left the stage-door of the Criterion, where he was playing "Send for Dr. O'Grady," he caught sight of two of the Irish members of the company.

"Good night, me darlings!" he cried cheerily. It was his farewell to them, and to the world of the theatre, for on the Tuesday he was rushed into the nursing-home to die.

I rather like to think of that as Charles Hawtrey's farewell to the cheery souls and things of the life he loved.

"Few people seem to realise how fine an actor Alexander is—until they have seen another try to play one of his parts," observed Tree one evening. He spoke *à propos* of "Tanqueray."

About forty-five years ago, the finger of fate pointed in three different directions to three young fellows in Leaf & Co.'s wholesale drapery warehouse. Leaf's was an old firm of high standing in the City of London, and for long their curved brass-plate was on the doorway in Old Change, just off Cannon Street.

The three young men were not destined to become drapers. Their names were Henry C. Richards, Robert Stuart Tripp and George Alexander Samson.

Richards left drapery, entered the Temple, and was called to the Bar. His progress was rapid; he took silk and aspired to Parliament. After fighting Labouchere and Bradlaugh at Northampton, he was elected for Finsbury and sat as a London M.P. for some ten years. His death in 1905 cut short a brilliant career, but his memorial stands to-day in the shape of St. Paul's Cross outside the Cathedral.

Tripp took a different course after quitting Leaf's. He went to South Africa, where he joined the Cape Mounted Rifles. On the outbreak of the war, he was given a commission in Methuen's Rifles, and the *Gazette* chronicled how a handful of men under Lieutenant Tripp overcame a large force of the enemy and covered themselves with glory. At the close of the war "Kaffir" Tripp, as everybody called him, returned to England, with £1,000, which he insisted on bringing back in golden sovereigns. He had a box expressly made to hold the coins, and very pretty they must have looked, but the box was empty when he landed. He was sharped out of the whole of his treasure one night at poker, but, characteristically, when he told the story, he added neither grumble nor regret. Tripp was a Bohemian of the best type of that vilely abused word; plucky, generous, faithful, never swaggering in good luck, and never grousing in bad. He was a fervent disciple of Plato, and would quote happily: "I would rather be a beggar and spend my last shilling like a king, than a king and spend riches like a beggar."

The third of the trio from Leaf's was young Samson, a smart, well-dressed youth with carefully brushed hair, who was more friendly with the theatrical than the literary set, who in those

commercial days frequented the little Italian café in Newgate Street, where his colleagues and a few friends—amongst them, Horace Lennard of the old "Pink 'Un"—used to congregate in the evenings.

It was Sarah Thorne, of the old Margate Theatre, to whom he went for lessons, who suggested the dropping of Samson for theatrical purposes.

"Biblical names are no good on the stage," she said quaintly. "Stick to your Christian names: they'll look well on a playbill."

When he came to London in 1882 he had the good fortune to attract the notice of Henry Irving, who gave him an engagement at the Lyceum, and from whom he acquired certain tricks of speech and gesture which he always retained.

His first success on his own account was with "Dr. Bill" at the Avenue, and to those who remember him only in his latest incarnation, as the stately, exquisitely-groomed actor-manager of the ultra-smart St. James's, his Kangaroo Dance with Fanny Brough in that Avenue triumph would come as a revelation and a shock.

There was one little party which took place shortly before the war to which I always look back with amusement.

Kennedy Jones had been bitten with a desire to breed and own a Derby winner, with characteristic energy had soaked himself in breeding and training lore, and had started a training establishment and a string of horses near Rottingdean. Amongst the party invited to motor over soon after dawn and inspect the new toy were "Dwarf" and "Alec."

Newnham-Davis, in spite of his long association with sporting papers, always looked upon racing with the amused tolerance of an elderly uncle for his little nephew's games; Alexander cared nothing and knew nothing; but both liked "K. J.," and did their best to humour his enthusiasms.

On their return to town, "Dwarf," it was noted, spoke approvingly of the breakfast and lunch, while "Alec," it was observed with a faint touch of malice, had especially admired the trainer's gaiters and breeches. But "Dwarf" did more. He wrote a long article on the trip for *Town Topics*, in which he dismissed horses, stables and jockeys in a few benignant lines before proceeding to a serious discussion on a ham, cured and cooked in some peculiar manner, which had figured on the breakfast table.

And at lunch at Romano's the following publishing day, it was " K. J." who attempted to get his own back.

" This paper," he said decisively, referring to *Town Topics*, in which he had taken an interest, " has got to be a racing paper, first and always ! "

And he shot a quick glance at Newnham-Davis.

" Do you think so ? " asked Dwarf blandly, in his most ducal manner, glancing at the menu, and " K. J." chuckled as his eye met Lennard's.

But Kennedy Jones had before that admitted that an attempt to introduce what were supposed by the staff of *Town Topics* to be Carmelite House methods into the conduct of the little paper was predestined to failure.

" Damn it all ! " exclaimed Pitcher one publishing day, nettled at a criticism from " K. J. " on the previous issue, " ' K. J.' has got to realise that he's only the bally capitalist ! If he's not satisfied we'll get another ! "

XIII

DRAMATIC CRITICS

Jimmy Davis—Gus Harris's Solicitor—" Pan "—Dramatic Critic—Pot Stephens —As Owner of Race Horses—Ill-luck—Sale of Geheimniss—" Pitching into the Actor-folk "—Start and Finish of " The Bat "—Jimmy's Editorial Ideals—Russell of Killowen v. Peter Callan—A Lord Chief Justice and a Night-Club Raid—Jimmy and the Creditor—A Silly Idea—The Great Jew Question—Financial Fluctuations—Cecil Raleigh—Queen Victoria and the Theatre—A Slating of Tree—Lady Archibald Campbell—A Famous Comedian—Bill Yardley's Trousers—Newnham-Davis.

A PERSONALITY amongst the many personalities who at various times filled the post of dramatic critic to the " Pink 'Un " was Jimmy Davis, otherwise " Owen Hall,"—a nom de plume he adopted for the simple and sufficient reason that he was for long in a chronic state of " owin' all."

He was never known other than " Jimmy." To have called him " Mr. James Davis " would have seemed absurd, and would probably have been savagely resented. Solicitor, editor, author, librettist, owner of horses, Davis was a curious product of the " black-coated, white-shirt-fronted " Bohemia which seems to have finally passed away.

As Gus Harris's solicitor, he combined the roles of legal adviser with pantomime counsel, and was particularly to the fore when it came to the selecting of the all-important show-girls for the Lane pantomimes. As journalist, his first venture was a sixpenny society journal, in partnership with Alfred Thompson, an ex-captain of Heavy Dragoons, and dress designer—surely an unique combination of talents in partnership. They called their paper *Pan*, and Jimmy became known as " Pan " Davis. Then Davis bought *The Cuckoo* from Edmund Yates, and carried it on for some time, but it was a sickly bird. After that he joined Corlett's staff as " The Brickbat," succeeding " Pot " Stephens, in a typically ingenuous way.

Stephens, a brilliant but eternally impecunious dramatist, author of " Billee Taylor " and other successful plays, borrowed £100 from his proprietor, who, to his surprise, one day

received a letter dated from Liverpool in which the critic announced that he was on his way to America for a trip, and had arranged with Davis to do his work at a pound a week less than he was receiving, and, by the end of two years, during which time he would be away, the debt of £100 would be wiped off.

Corlett did not quite see the point, and appointed Davis as full critic.

Henry Pottinger Stephens was a nephew of Sir Henry Pottinger, and had been destined for a diplomatic career. His brother, who was known to old " Pink 'Uns " as " The Commodore," was in the Navy. Pot drifted into journalism while in Paris, whence he wrote for *The Times*, and on his return to London he was snapped up by Thomas Gibson Bowles for *Vanity Fair*. Then he became John Corlett's dramatic critic. Master used to say that all his dramatic critics blossomed into playrights, and he certainly had a goodly array of them to show in Bill Yardley, Cecil Raleigh, Pot, Jimmy Davis, and others—to say nothing of the Dwarf and his ballets and musical comedy.

Old John himself dabbled only rarely in things theatrical, but when he did, he did it in his own unmistakable manner.

I remember one morning, when, full of gout, he came up from Bottombarley and accused the assembled staff of incurable slackness.

" The paper's not topical enough ! " he snarled. " There's Anna Held at the Palace ; —has anybody written anything up to date about Anna Held ? "

On the news being broken to him that nobody had and nobody intended to, he angrily seized a pen, and, grumbling something about having to do all the work himself, scrawled this portentous front-page epigram :

" Let Anna hold what Anna Held ! "

Few of those who met him in his Curzon Street days, in his incarnation as the successful playwright, author of " The Gaiety Girl," " Florodora," " The Girl from Kay's," " The Greek Slave," " The Geisha," " The Artist's Model " and the rest, realised that among the many roles in which Jimmy Davis had figured was that of the owner of race-horses.

Quite early in his career he managed to build up a considerable legal practice, and, marrying a very sprightly heiress, few men have started life better placed. His connection with the Turf, and the card-table as well, was disastrous to him, and it

was by a curious irony of fate that it was a horse belonging to his future editor which brought his career as owner of horses to an end. Jimmy for some time had a considerable string at Danebury with Tom Cannon, and his final plunge was at the Alexandra Park meeting of 1880. He had won the Cleveland Handicap at Shrewsbury and a good stake with his horse Skillygolee, and the horse was sent to run at Alexandra Park in the Flying Mid-Weight Handicap, carrying a penalty of 7 lbs. Another horse of his, Gourmand, was also sent, in order to secure some good betting on the Corinthian Handicap, for which there were only three runners, one of them the Philomele colt—afterwards named Sir Patrick Spens—and Cavendish Square. Said Captain Piggott to old John Corlett: "The Ring sometimes gives us the chance of betting, and they're doing it now. At times when there are twenty runners they'll ask you to lay 2 to 1 on one, and here they're taking 2 to 1 that you don't name it in twice, with only three runners and one of them that has no earthly chance."

"Which two are you laying odds on?" asked Corlett.

"Gourmand and Cavendish Square."

"Then you'll see something," grunted the old man, who had £200 on Sir Patrick Spens, and he did.

Before they had gone half way, Webb pulled Cavendish Square up, soon afterwards the Danebury plunge on Gourmand was equally hopeless, and Sir Patrick Spens came in first. The £350 Corlett had won he told "Hotspur," who had placed his commission, to put on the horse again, it having been decided to run him in the race in which Skillygolee was engaged.

"You're mad, John," declared the commissioner. "You've no chance of beating Jimmy's horse. You're making too much of his beating those duffers. Besides, there's a 7 lbs. penalty."

But Corlett stuck to his guns, and went to a remote part of the stand to watch the race, when that quaint little Newmarket character, "Dickey" Barrow, seeing him, said half doubtingly:

"You don't expect to do it again, do you, John?"

"Yes," said old Corlett magisterially, "and you had better get on yourself."

Barrow hurried down, and returned having secured 8 to 1.

There were a dozen runners, and coming into the straight Skillygolee seemed to have the race won, but Sir Patrick Spens

challenged, and beat him a length. Corlett then began to calculate his winnings.

"Eight to one to £350: that comes to £2800. Splendid! And the £350 as well: that makes £3150."

Then "Hotspur" appeared with gloomy face. "All I got you," he said, "was 5 to 2. It was favourite at the opening, and with so much money to go on I daren't wait."

As a matter of fact, he had smashed the market with Corlett's money to pave the way for the Skillygolee commission, and when the latter came up in the betting, Sir Patrick, of course, went back. Still, it was a substantial win.

The following day, Skillygolee won the Alexandra Gold Cup, and after that the "chocolate and white hoops, green cap" were seen no more.

About this period probably the best horse Davis owned was Buxton, who, the following year, ran in the Lincolnshire in the name and colours of Tom Cannon.

Jimmy backed him to win £20,000, but, in a field of thirty-six runners, with 10 to 1 betted on the field—in all probability a record—Buchanan cleared the lot and won by ten lengths.

Towards the close of his Turf career, he bought several yearlings. When the time came for paying for them, he had to tell Tom Cannon that he could not afford to keep them all. So some were weeded out, and amongst the lot he parted with was Geheimniss, while he kept others that never won a race.

The Turf not proving kind to Jimmy, he decided to take to literature, and if the Turf had whipped him with whips, literature applied scorpions.

The ill-fated *Pan* was the first venture, for which he secured the help of some very clever professional writers, and there was a shout of derision from them when he announced his intention of writing an article himself.

"Jimmy Davis writing an article! Ha, ha! Come and have a drink!"

It was little dreamt at the time that he was capable of writing off the heads of all his staff. *Pan* was a failure; the *Topical Times* did little better, and then Jimmy became connected with the *Sporting Times*.

As dramatic critic, Jimmy Davis had his own ideals, and methods, and as he took an impish delight in what he styled "pitching into the actor folk," it was small wonder that his editor and proprietor returned from one of his annual holidays

abroad to find that, owing to the idiosyncracies of his critic, he was not on speaking terms with many of his old friends in the world of the theatre, including the Bancrofts and Hare. As a sample of Jimmy Davis's humour, a paragraph of his on a Lyceum function may serve.

"The *élite* of the stage attended the professional matinée of 'Faust' given by Irving at the Lyceum. I don't so much allude to the Kendals and the Bancrofts as to the fact which stamped the gathering as truly representative of the profession. Squash, the racecourse and Henley-on-Thames nigger, was invited."

The statement as to the invitation was strictly true, for the generous Irving had a curious admiration for the personality in question—but there were other ways of putting it.

As John Corlett grew tired of quarrelling with his old friends on account of his critic's vagaries, one fine day the old man said:

"Jimmy, here's £600, go and start a little hell of your own."

Which Jimmy did, with a vengeance, in the *Bat*, in which, for a short time Corlett had an interest. All that he saw in return was a nicely bound copy of the first volume, on the fly-leaf of which was written in Davis's hand: "All that was left of them, left of £600."

The *Bat*, after a somewhat hectic career, ended in a welter of libel actions, an action by the Earl of Durham being the reason for its editor's removal to Paris for a prolonged holiday.

To say nothing of its editor, on the staff of the *Bat* were some of the most cheerily irresponsible writers of the day, so the climax was hardly unexpected. And many were the stories told of the "making up" and writing of the *Bat*, most of which processes occurred in Davis's house.

On one occasion, Shifter, the Pagan—afterwards to achieve fame in his own name of George Moore,—and Sir Walter had been sent off to the drawing-room, as presumably the most appropriate setting in which to write fashion and society paragraphs, and when the editor burst in to ask what the heated argument was about, the three worst spellers in journalism yelled at him:

"Here, you decide it! How many 't's' are there in Duchess?"

Jimmy's ideals of editorship were not unfairly summed up in a paragraph in the "Notes to Queries" column of Corlett's

paper, addressed to the mercurial one while on one of his holidays.

"Take your holiday, dear old boy," it ran, "and be perfectly at your ease. Your pals are rallying round you. Rossetti's model who, thank heaven, is still with us, has written an article on the Hula-Hula, and a man we saw being thrown out of the Criterion has written a magnificent column on Turf matters. His argument is that all the Members of the Jockey Club rope their horses, and as he has given names and instances, the article will create a sensation. Diana needn't drivel this week. Tots has come to the rescue, and her description of the dresses worn at Haymarket night-houses in the old days makes one yearn that those times were these. News is scarce, but by calling two Bishops daylight robbers, a Cabinet Minister a liar, three judges perjured scoundrels, and plainly stating that the heirs to at least eighteen peerages were not born in wedlock, we hope to cheer up your public and yourself."

In the absence of its erratic editor, other people had to bear the brunt of the battle, and in the journalistic nurseries a new version of an old song ran:

> "Fill the old *Bat* with plenty of fat,
> Playhouses, roundabouts, sports and all that:
> Ink on your fingers and sweat on your brow—
> Don't you wish Jimmy was editing now?"

At one time he attempted Parliament, and fought Dundalk against Lord Russell of Killowen and Peter Callan.

"I think my billstickers voted for me, but I'm not sure of all of them," was his comment on his failure.

Russell beat both Callan and Jimmy, and it was generally believed that he owed his success to a curious incident, for Callan had been the popular favourite.

On their way to Dundalk, Callan and Russell were fellow passengers, and at Euston some angry words had passed between them.

When the train stopped at Crewe, Callan got out to stretch his legs on the platform, and observed Russell striding towards him with that resolute, determined look on his face so characteristic of him.

Callan, thinking that his political opponent meant to

hit him, stepped back a pace in order to return the imaginary blow, and went head over heels over an unobserved portmanteau.

A version of the story reached Dundalk.

"Did ye hear now," said one Irishman gleefully to another, "how little Charlie Russell knocked big Peter Callan base over apex?" And they admired the feat so much that it turned the election.

"Base over apex," one may remark, sounded different in Irish.

And Charlie Russell was not always the stern, majestic "Lord Chief" of his last phase.

Night-clubs of a certain class exist to be raided, but the average raid lacks sensation and produces little else than frowsy Jews and aliens who are safer off the streets. But there was a police raid of twenty or thirty years ago which might have caused a real sensation—and didn't.

Sir Robert Anderson frankly admitted that one of the disappointments of his official life was that during the few minutes spent in arranging for the raid on the Field Club two men passed quietly out whose arrest would have added to the gaiety of London, for one of them had held office as Her Majesty's Attorney-General and was destined to become Lord Chief Justice of England.

The bird who escaped the net was Russell of Killowen, between whom and Sir Robert little love was lost.

In the old irresponsible days, on more than one occasion in his variegated career did Jimmy Davis find it desirable to attempt to placate the all but implacable in the shape of infuriated creditors, and, on the whole, his success was by no means contemptible, but once he failed, and failed badly.

He wished to conciliate a recalcitrant tradesman, and pondered long and deeply as to what Christmas present he could give him. Then, as he passed along Pall Mall, a brilliant idea struck him, and he despatched to that tradesman a beautiful, large *pâté de foie gras*.

Now the tradesman had never partaken of that kind of food before, but it was with a grateful heart that he first devoured all the crust, and then ate manfully through the lard on the top of the pie.

As a present it was a failure, for, as soon as that tradesman had left off being sick, he hurled writs at the donor, and con-

tinued to hurl them, until even his lawyer protested at his bitterness and inhumanity.

Probably the first time Jimmy had quite a free hand in his stage work was when he wrote the libretto of "Florodora," and he put into it his very best work. That work, and the tiring effort of keeping his brain on the stretch during the very long rehearsals took it out of him tremendously. No one, unless he has been through the experience, knows what nervous business final rehearsals of a big production are to an author.

Jimmy Davis once told me he was so "cooked" by the strain that when, at one of the rehearsals, Willie Edouin asked him for a line to lead up to a song, his brain absolutely refused to work and he found he could not write it.

Willie Edouin was the most nervous comedian I have ever met, and in his case, as in that of many other old actors, his nervousness grew with each succeeding part he played. To wait in the wings before he went on the stage was sheer agony to him, and he used to time it to a second to come from his dressing-room and walk straight on, so as not to be kept waiting for his entrance.

"Florodora" will go down in history as being the musical comedy in which the Chorus Man became an important being. The Chorus Lady had been given her position by Gilbert in his stage directions of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, but the Chorus Man remained a fat, elderly party, with a blue chin, who, unless he was given a comic make-up, was kept in the background and boomed out a considerable amount of noise.

In the "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden" number of "Florodora," the appearance of the men counted for just as much as that of the girls, and those men were the fore-runners of the present well-groomed young people who form the male chorus at any London musical show. George Grossmith told a supper-party once that all the chorus men at the Gaiety nowadays have houses in Berkeley Square.

The supper parties of Jimmy Davis that will remain historical are those he used to give on Saturday nights in the little house in Curzon Street. Celebrities of every kind used to come to those suppers and behave as though they were ordinary beings. I came across the other day some verses written either by Shirley Brooks or by Shifter—by the former, I fancy—describing one of these suppers. The skit went the round privately, and was much laughed at, but it might have given offence, if printed,

to some of those who were supposed to have been present. Most of them have now joined the great majority, and the others certainly will not now resent what was said of them. Here are the verses, in the manner of Hans Breitmann:

"James Davis gif a barty,
Dey shpieled mit der broads.
Der vas gonophs, der vas shentlemans,
Und shernalists, und lords.
Dey shneaked each others' pockets,
Dey played biano tunes;
Dey shtole der missus' lockets
Und vent avay mit de shpoons.

James Davis gif a barty.
Vere ish dot barty vent?
Vere ish der man in der corner
Vat vanted shent per shent?
Ver is der man vat wrote der libel
Und der man vat wrote der tale
Und der man vat pawned der Bible?
All gone to Newgate Gaol.

James Davis gif a barty,
Der vash ofer Davis dere,
Von Joseph D. von Drakensburg,
Folks shpeak him a lumberer;
Und der alsho vas an English lord,
Vid a body shtout and legs
Ash big ash a madchen's body
Und bootons bigger than eggs.

Und anoder lord sits by him,
Vat told some frightful lies,
About vat he'd seen in der teatres,
Mit ackdresses on der slys;
Und Mishter Hughie Drummon
Sang us a lofely tune:
How at Fine Shtreet he'd been summoned
Und bailed by Mishter Sassoon.

James Davis gif a barty,
Ve got all ash drunk as shvine.
Der wash coppers in dere morgen;
But noon more hot ash mine.
Der Labouchere wash bilious,
Der Shirley haf der shoomps;
Und Downs gif in his notiss,
Und der missus got der humps.

James Davis gif a barty,
Der was Misther Edmund Yates,
Vat had proken out of brison,
By climbing ofter der gates;
Und I sat close py a lofely maid,
Vat dolt me her name vash Ada,
Und vouldn't gif me her address,
Till I gif her mooch prandy und made her.

James Davis gif a barty,
Vere ish dot barty now?
Vere ish der Chamberlain's acres?
Vere is dot blasted cow?
Vere ish der Herman's Fay of Fire,—
Dot opera brisk und bright?
All gone avay mit der brokersh man,
Avay in der Ewigkeit!"

One of Rider Haggard's early successes was, on the night of publication, being discussed at the Brickbat's supper table, and a certain young subaltern who had just been admitted to the circle, was airing his views.

"That's a jolly novel idea," said he, "when the chap who is dying and wants to make his last will and what-you-may-call-it calls for needles and indigo and has his bequests tattooed down the girl's back."

"Damn silly—if it covered the whole of her back," grunted Davis.

"Why silly?"

"Because, my dear fellow, nine men out of ten who make their wills change their minds soon afterwards, so that if this chap had wanted to add a codicil he would have had to have it tattooed—"

And here the discreet butler Downs, possibly in order to explain the fact that there were ladies present, dropped a salver with a crash.

The best jokes about Jews come from the Jews, and Jimmy Davis was the originator of many of them.

"Jimmy," once said Shifter to the Brickbat, "do you believe that the Jews will all go back to Jerusalem? Say that if you provided each of them with a special Pullman, with a jeweller's shop at one end, a cigar divan at the other, and a baccarat table in the middle, with ten Goyishers anxious to play, and gave your Yiddisher a tenner to start with; would he go?"

"No," replied Jimmy firmly, "he wouldn't. He'd want another quid to square the driver to have an accident, and drop him at the corner of Petticoat Lane."

When Sir Walter Besant published "The Doubts of Dives," the heartburnings of a Mr. Dives (rhyming to wives, drives, or fives) took their place in the history of the troubles caused by fiction. But far greater was the indignation of the Regent Street mourning milliners when "Owin' Everybody"—as some coarse, commercial-minded soul re-christened him—called a musical comedy "The Girl from Jay's," though even then the summit of the great warehousemen's ire was not reached.

"You surely don't think you're the only jays in a big place like London, do you?" asked Davis hotly.

His financial fluctations made the life of a writer for one of Jimmy's papers far from dull, and a contributor to *The Phœnix* tired of waiting, at last made an appeal to the editor's better feelings.

Jimmy was touched, and, in reply, in that meticulous writing of his, pleaded the Act of God.

"Things are so bad with me," he wrote, "and to make matters worse, I have just heard that my beautiful country house has been totally destroyed by fire."

On the blank back sheet of the communication the creditor scribbled:

"If I'd known you'd had a fire I'd have asked double. Surely you can spare me a bit of the profits?"

It was a retort after Davis's heart, and the long-awaited cheque came by return.

Through a barrister friends, Jimmy—a *fin gourmet*, if ever there was one—once dined in the Temple.

"I love those dinners in the Temple," he observed later,

" so restful, so romantic, so—inspiring. I sit still, and drink sherry and bitters,—and then go home and have a meal."

Although the theatre was the world he loved to revolve in, Corlett had learnt better than to use little Willie Goldberg as his dramatic critic. In which the old man differed from the millionaire proprietor of a great daily.

One dark, damp, dull, depressing day in Fleet Street, Shifter espied the great man's familiar red-wheeled brougham outside the Cheshire Cheese, and entered the hostelry—together with his secret yearning to be employed in work more serious, and, incidentally, more remunerative than that he had long been doing.

At the little bar on the right of the entrance, the great man was affability and generosity personified, and rolled into one genial personality. Indeed, he broached the subject.

" I've often wondered, Shif, that you never tried your hand at our sort of theatrical stuff," he opened. " The theatre seems the world you love to revolve in: try your hand at serious criticism. Look here, I'll commission you, here and now, to write the notice of Gus Harris's Drury Lane show ' Pleasure.' It's next Saturday, so your copy will do by Sunday afternoon. Gives you plenty of time: ordinarily it would have to be in an hour after the fall of the curtain. I'll send you the stall—what's the number of your flat in Dane's Inn? Yes, yes. Treat it lightly, if you like. Fanny Brough's in it, and Harry Nicholls. There's an earthquake, and a battle of flowers—you know the sort of thing."

And Shifter knew the sort of thing right well. " Pleasure " was a spectacular melodrama of the conventional sort, and in starting his first essay in serious criticism, the critic came straight to his horses. Wrote he:

" ' Pleasure,' the new autumn drama at Drury Lane, is claimed by Augustus Harris to be taken straight from life. It is. The first act starts well, with the beautiful and virtuous heroine admittedly in the family way. Hereupon loud and virtuous applause from everybody,—especially my companion, Pitcher, in E13,—as this is about as close to real life as you can get it."

And of the full column criticism—will you believe it?—not one paragraph appeared. Not one paragraph? Not one line; no note of explanation, no apology,—" no nothing."

" Pitch," said the critic sadly to Arthur Binstead some days

later, " it's no use. We must stick to the job we've been used to ; we must go on, and on, and on, writing of wine and women—women and wine—they don't want *us* in the higher journalism ! "

Cecil Raleigh was another " Pink 'Un " critic who had a way of writing exactly what he thought,—a form of dramatic criticism which may possibly be overdone, and which, when carried to the lengths " Sir Walter " occasionally carried it, might not be found to commend itself to the modern newspaper proprietor.

Queen Victoria's indifference to the theatre was for long a sore point with the profession, and when at last the ice was broken and—Hengler's Circus was " commanded " to Windsor, the theatrical folk were no better pleased.

" Now that the ice has been broken," wrote Sir Walter, " I trust that a variety of harmless and interesting entertainments may find their way into the historic fortress of English Kings and Queens. Verbeck, Toole, and the Tilley family could make up a nice little programme amongst them, whilst the Viadis Sisters, Paul Cinquevalli and imitations of actors by Herbert Standing offer a nice alternative. Some day, perhaps, we shall even live to read in the *Court Circular* a paragraph to the effect that " Mr. James Fernandez having recited ' The Lifeboat ' with impressive effect, Mr. Arthur Roberts should have appeared, but after an interval of some minutes Mr. Farnie announced to Her Majesty that the artiste could not be found, and he was about to explain that he had been seen lunching only a short time previously, when the popular vocalist rushed hurriedly on to the platform and instantly restored the Royal good humour by singing :

' Oh, once again let your glasses click, click !
Battenberg's sherry has made me so sick ! ' "

And, interesting as a matter of history, here is an extract from Sir Walter's criticism of a young actor's appearance in " Jim the Penman " :

" Tree evidently made up his mind to go in and damn himself once and for ever. He made up his face like a badly carved gargoyle, he spoke in a thin cracked voice, he wore very improbable clothes, and he jerked in a perpetual and meaningless catchword at every inconvenient opportunity. He came right out of the picture, effected nothing especially remarkable himself, yet went far to spoiling the artistic endeavours of other people. He defied at once both nature and art ; he introduced into a

fashionable drawing-room an entity that would in real life have been kicked downstairs or thrown out of the window; he was contemptible when he should have been humorous, ridiculous when he should have been *suave*. His rage was akin to the fury of delirium tremens, and his fear like unto the horror and the weakness of unusual sobriety."

They hit hard in those days, but it seemed to do no one a ha'porth of harm.

How would a lady of title who has decided to appear in public take this sort of criticism nowadays?

"If the Pastoral Plays mean simply and solely the glorification of Lady Archibald Campbell, then the sooner the whole thing collapses the better, for she is not a good actress. She is a tallish woman, thin and spare, with bony wrists and long nervous hands. She has apparently passed the meridian of her youth. She speaks with a queer sort of catch in her voice that suggests a foreign accent, but which, perhaps, is produced by the curious spasmodic twitch of the muscles around the upper lip and nose. When standing still she has a moderate command of her gestures, but the instant she begins to walk about, she becomes stilted, stiff and angular. Her facial expression, too, lacks softness and vivacity. Altogether she is a rather tired, washed-out-looking woman, and her performance of Rosalind was colourless and flat."

And this of a famous comedian:

"It is the sort of play he has played dozens of times before, and in it he merely does what he has done on numberless previous occasions; he waddles frequently and sometimes limps; he twitches his eyebrows and clears his throat; he gabbles and he emphasises just as he has always done. I am getting very tired of this sort of thing, and it bores me. He may have amused people years ago, but we move, gentlemen, and nowadays we look to find something more in a comic actor than phlegm and fidgets."

It is the fashion nowadays—for good or evil matters not—to place acting and actors on a very highbrow plane. It was not ever so.

"The great art of acting is to borrow your 'props' and always be in time for your treasury," once confided to me a hard-bitten super, with occasional lines to speak, who had followed Irving at the Lyceum for years, and then migrated to His Majesty's under Tree.

Cecil Raleigh's first introduction to his future editor took place soon after he had left school. Corlett had gone down to Epsom to see a trial of The Scamp, Sir John Astley's horse, trained by "Fog" Rowlands, and the future dramatic critic and dramatist rode the horse in its trials, and right well he did it. So impressed was old John by the style in which the horse won that he made it his sole selection for the race—the Croydon Hurdle, a big stake on which there was heavy betting, and over which Sir John won many thousands.

Raleigh, as may be gathered, was a somewhat precocious youth, and when at school wrote a series of articles for the *Globe* on naval administration and tactics. These were hotly opposed by some old Admirals, and as hotly supported by others. But each old Admiral, for or against, would have had a fit had he realised that he was engaged in literary strife on technical naval matters with a lad at school.

Another dramatic critic was Bill Yardley, "Bill of the Play." A fine athlete, a good fellow, and full of fun, Yardley was one of the most irascible and impatient of men.

On the first night of some play, which he knew would finish late, he put up at the Hotel Cecil, having with him only his dress clothes and the suit he was wearing. He put his ordinary trousers out to be brushed, and next morning they were not forthcoming. Search was made for them, high and low, but without avail, and every minute Yardley's wrath was becoming greater and greater. The climax arrived when a loutish page-boy blurted knowingly:

"Are you sure you had 'em on when you came, sir?"

The idea of Bill Yardley walking about the Strand without his trousers was too much, and astonished guests and chambermaids beheld an infuriated big man chasing a scared small boy round the endless hotel corridors.

On the cricket field his methods were occasionally upsetting, even to his friends.

In a certain match at Lord's his side was only 12 runs on in the second innings when Yardley came in. He was always a terror, but on this occasion was particularly aggressive, and in his hundred were only thirteen singles. Another "Pink 'Un" contributor joined him at the wickets when he was a few short of his century, and after a few more runs had been made, Bill walked over to his companion.

"Frank," he said, "I know I'm 99. When I call, you run like the devil!"

His companion said he would, and the next ball Yardley patted straight down the wicket, and with an agonised yell of "Come on!" followed it.

The other fellow, a slow but sure runner, scrambled home by inches, but had not the Oxford men been too astonished to move, must have been out by yards.

To a long list of dramatic critics succeeded Newnham-Davis, and the Dwarf was Corlett's dramatic critic until the sale of the paper to the "young gentleman from Oxford," de Wend Fenton, one of whose claims to a knowledge of the world was that he had been warned off the Turf.

XIV

THE DWARF OF BLOOD

Conflicting Ambitions—The Military *jeune premier*—Scene Painting—The Old Aquarium—The Budding Journalist—The Ceylon "Cuckoo"—Proof Correction—The Christening—A Jaw-breaker—Shirley Brooks, of *Punch*—The Future "Blobbs"—Dwarf as Artist—Bessie Bellwood—The Spooferies—Arthur Roberts—The Parrot and the Complaint Book—The "Ladies' Room"—Bessie Bellwood—The Sisters Leamar—The Pantomime—The Indian Jeweller—Swears' Gift—Dwarf's Birthdays—"The Most Versatile Man in London"—His Military Career—The Transvaal—Isandula—Rorke's Drift—The Chief and the Six Dusky Beauties—Mess President—The "Undrinkable" Champagne—The Gourmet on Active Service—Oham—A Culinary Hint—The London Restaurants—Newnham-Davis's Influence—Ballets and Plays—Dramatic Critic—Sir Frank Burnand—à Beckett—Douglas Straight—The *Pall Mall Gazette*—à Beckett's Difficulties with *Punch*—Military Dialogues—Corlett and Burnand—Burnand's Difficulties—Consults Dwarf—Pacific Advice—Burnand's Poem—War—Alexandra Palace—The Interned Prisoners—A Record Disembarcation.

WHEN the youthful Newnham-Davis was about to go up for his examination for the Service, he was torn by conflicting desires. He wanted to clank a sword over the cobblestones, and at the same time he desired frantically to smell the footlights and be an actor. So he compromised by passing his examination and then going to Mr. Coe, the stage-manager of the Haymarket, to learn from him all that was possible of the art and mystery of the stage. When Dwarf had been told that he talked like a Cockney, and had been made to learn all the *jeune premier* parts in old comedy, he thought he would like to learn something about scene-painting, so Mr. Coe passed him on to his "friend" Mr. Perkins, who painted in the scene-room of the theatre attached to the old Aquarium. There the young soldier sported a blouse, cooked his chop over the painting-room fire, and painted all on his own horrific dragons on the battlements of a scene for a pantomime.

The Dwarf's virgin attempts in journalism were with the *Cuckoo*, a tiny paper which a little group of fellows in Ceylon started for their own amusement and the edification of their

friends and enemies. The staff was composed of brokers, bankers, soldiers, lawyers and officials, all cocksure that nothing they could write could possibly incur official displeasure. The little paper survived a whole monsoon, in spite of having been denounced to the Home Department for failure to deposit the Caution Money, a terrible fuss over a cartoon of a club secretary, and an article on an imaginary war with France which appeared during the visit of some French war-ships to the island, and resulted in a huge dinner on the French flagship—which had been sunk in the article.

The Dwarf's business at the birth of the *Cuckoo* was to bring together the prospective staff, and, as one of them pointed out, he proved himself thoroughly fitted for journalistic work, for in the short letter he wrote to each man, were three words misspelt, and one sentence of faulty grammar. But spelling was always a stumbling-block to Lieutenant-Colonel Newnham-Davis. He was wont to boast that he was as near as no matter "spun" in his entrance examination for the Service for writing words as he thought they looked best, and in the "Pink 'Un" days, he once gave great delight to the printing works by writing a direction on a proof that it was to be "carefully read for literals"—and spelling "literals" with two "t's." His sympathy was always with the young Guardsman who telephoned through to Headquarters that he had posted his picket on the second "r" of the word "forest" on the map.

But good spelling and success in journalism are not necessarily bedfellows.

When he first, while still wearing a sword and drawing Her late Majesty's pay, started to write,—or rather to draw,—for Corlett's paper, he signed himself by the jaw-breaking title "The Man who Lived next Door to Blobbs." As a small boy, Newnham-Davis lived at No. 5 Kent Terrace, and next door, at No. 6, lived Shirley Brooks, the elder. Once, when being sent off in a four-wheeler to Miss Woodman's day-school "for the sons of noblemen and gentlemen," the cab turned over. The horse stood quietly, the cabman cursed his ill-fortune, and a little flight of flustered nurses, maidservants, and aunts fluttered round the cab, inside which were two small boys, caged like puppies in a dog-box, half-amused and half-afraid.

A big man in a velveteen suit came down the steps of No. 6, put an arm through a window, and lifted out, one after another, the small boys. That rescuer was the then editor of *Punch*. A

little boy, with his hair in curls, stood in the doorway of No. 6 and watched his father's prowess. That little boy was Reginald Shirley Brooks, the future " Blobbs " of the " Pink 'Un."

Once again in knickerbocker days Dwarf and Blobbs were to meet. Playing in the gardens before Kent Terrace, two ragged little boys outside the railings had said rude things to the future Lieutenant-Colonel of the " Buffs," who had retaliated. They threw a handful of mud, and the sucking warrior reached through the railings to smack their faces. They seized an arm and began to pull. There seemed every probability of the arm being dragged from its socket, when like a whirlwind the small boy from No. 6 came to the rescue, and made such play with fists and boots that the assailants bolted.

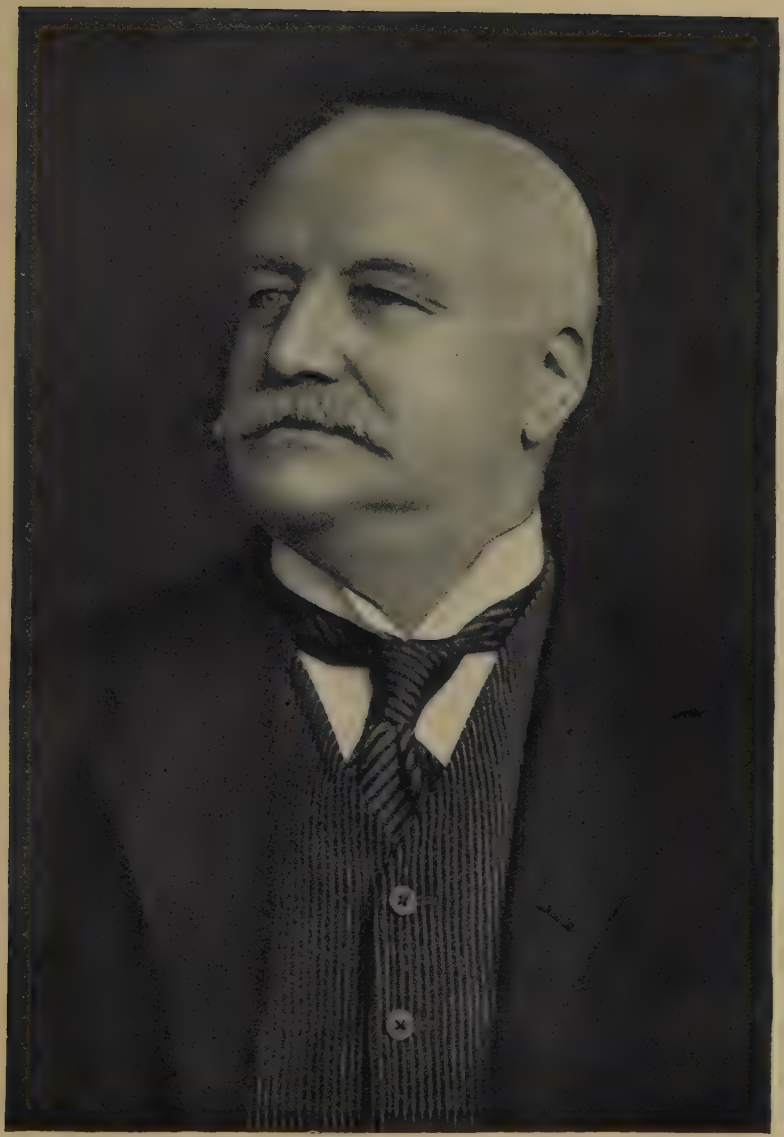
The two future *confrères* were not to meet again until the young Shirley Brooks, as " Blobbs," was writing some of the cleverest articles that ever appeared in Corlett's paper.

Happening to stay with Newnham-Davis in barracks at the depot of the " Buffs," he asked why the young soldier did not try his hand at journalism. There was a talk at the time of beautifying London by finding sites for new statues, and Dwarf sent to the office in Fleet Street some pictorial suggestions of statues required, signing himself " The Man Who Lived Next Door to Blobbs." That was Newnham-Davis's first contribution to the " Pink 'Un."

Shirley Brooks was responsible for introducing Dwarf to Bessie Bellwood, and Bessie was responsible for his final *nom de plume*.

She was singing at the Royal in those days, and Shirley, Shifter, and a little crowd that always went about with them used to go almost every night and rejoice in her impromptus and patter. From the Royal, one winter evening, Bessie, Shirley, Shifter, and Davis drove to the Spoofs Club for supper. Arthur Roberts was the guiding star of the Spooferies, a club which had a parrot and a complaint book, and was said to have a committee and rules, to which no one paid any attention. Members were requested—as a favour—not to sleep under the billiard tables, for their presence there interfered with the housemaids when they came to sweep the room out in the morning. It was situated off one of the alleys between the Strand and Maiden Lane, and was, I believe, originally the Cider Cellars.

Some genius thought the presence of ladies might have a



Photograph : Van Dyck

LIEUT.-COL. NEWNHAM-DAVIS

"The Dwarf of Blood"

refining influence on the members, so an ill-shaped little triangular room was christened "The Ladies' Room," and members were allowed to give supper there to their lady friends.

Bessie Bellwood owned that room.

She supped there most nights and when she was in possession there was very little time for anyone else to talk. On this particular night, the Sisters Leamar, who used to sing about

"Ro-ma-nos
As papa knows"

were the only other divinities at supper, and the Bellwood, when she had supped, and pronounced the tripe and onions almost, but not quite, as good as that supplied at Chick's, announced that, as she had not been to the pantomime that year, she was going to have a pantomime of her very own.

Tables were pushed out of the way, and Bessie, tucking up her skirts, announced that she was the Prince, and principal boy. One of the Sisters was the Princess, and the other was the Good Fairy; Shifter was the Witch, Old Mother Sniff, because he had a long nose, and Shirley was Peter the Paralytic Pirate, because he wore a long beard. A part was found for everybody but Newnham-Davis, who put in his plea and asked who he was.

Bessie looked at his six foot figure.

"Oh, you're the Dwarf of Blood!" she announced. "Get under the table, and if anyone dries up, jump out, and shout: 'Ha! ha! I am the Dwarf of Blood!'"

No one did dry up, and none of the cast got a chance of saying a word, except when Bessie laughed so much that she could not talk. But next day Newnham-Davis was hailed as "The Dwarf of Blood," and the Dwarf, so far as the "Pink 'Un" was concerned, he remained ever afterwards.

When the new signature duly appeared, a man in India, a partner in one of the big jewellery firms, who knew native life in Calcutta as not one in tens of thousands of white men see it, and the ways of Rajahs when the eye of the Viceroy is not on them, sent Dwarf for good luck in his new profession a trinket to wear on his watch-chain—a tiny, solid gold figure of a mis-shapen dwarf with ruby eyes, and from it Newnham-Davis copied the little dwarf which for so long served as his signature.

For five or six years that dwarf hung on his watch-chain, and then it was stolen in a crush at a corner of Piccadilly. It was a coincidence that a fortnight after the theft, news came from India of the death of the donor.

Swears—the one and only Swears—in a moment of generous impulse, declared, when he heard of the loss, that he would replace it. At intervals he remembered his promise, and thought it necessary to explain its non-performance. One Christmas, one of these explanatory spasms came upon him.

He looked at Dwarf with eyes like those of a trusting, pet gazelle, and, his husky voice trembling with emotion:

"You know that little dwarf I'm giving you, dear old thing?" he wheezed. "Well, the jeweller made it of gold and enamel,—not nearly beautiful enough for you, dear old Colonel; so I've told him to take off the enamel and put precious stones instead!"

But, for some reason or other, the substitute dwarf never reached the Dwarf of Blood.

During his service in India Dwarf frequently came into contact with Lord Roberts, as, indeed, did every other officer under his command, for no Commander-in-Chief in India had so close a knowledge of the men who served under him. And, like the other men, Newnham-Davis admired him with an admiration that was almost adoration.

The first time Lord Roberts spoke to Dwarf, the latter used to tell, was during an inspection of the regiment at Dum-dum, the great arsenal outside Calcutta. After his inspection, the C-in-C. requested to be shown over the soldiers' institute, and it was Dwarf's duty to take him round and explain all the arrangements that had been made for the men's comfort. These institutes were part of the Temperance crusade of which Lord Roberts was a life-long champion, and he had given an order that the institute in each cantonment was to be housed in the best building available, no matter what other interests suffered.

Lord Roberts had a great deal to say to Newnham-Davis and the other officers who went round the building as to the conditions in the Service when he first joined the Company's Artillery there, on his arrival in India as a very young subaltern. Then he said he would like to see the bungalow in which he lived when he first joined at Dum-dum. With his staff of Commander-in-Chief and a variety of high officers following, he walked along the main road, and then, turning up a byway,

halted before a very modest little building. So modest, indeed, was the bungalow that it had ceased to be an officer's quarters, and had been handed over to a non-commissioned officer, whose wife appeared in the verandah, mightily astonished at the invasion of distinguished visitors. Lord Roberts asked her permission to go inside and look round, and his staff waited outside while the great man looked once more at the little room which had housed him when he was a youngster dreaming of fame.

Lord Roberts was equally famous both for his memory for faces and for detail that in any way affected the comfort of the men under him. Some weeks afterwards, Newnham-Davis was sent up to Simla to join the Intelligence, some survey work he had done on the Northern Frontier having gained him the appointment, and, walking in the Mall, he met Lord Roberts, riding with Ian Hamilton and Pole Carew. The Commander-in-Chief pulled up, and, addressing him by name, said that he was pleased to have been able to approve his name as an Attaché to the Intelligence, and then asked abruptly what had been done at Dum-dum to a smoky chimney of which the serjeant-major's wife had complained during his last inspection.

The great little man's dislike of cats is, of course, proverbial, and Dwarf was once witness of the extraordinary effect the presence of the animal had on him.

One evening at Mandalay the guests at a dinner-party waited long for the Commander-in-Chief, usually the most punctual of men. The long delay at last caused some alarm, and an aide-de-camp went into Lord Roberts' bedroom. There he found his chief, half-dressed, sitting immobile, as though hypnotised, while a cat that wished to be friendly rubbed itself against his legs.

One afternoon, shortly before the outbreak of war, I happened to walk up Regent Street behind Lord Roberts—who, of course, was in civilian dress. I had recognised him as I stepped out of the Cafe Royal, and as the trim, upstanding little figure walked on through the crowds of well-dressed folk, I was amazed to see that not a solitary soul seemed to notice him—until at the corner of Vigo Street he came abreast of two of the most unpromising individuals I had ever set eyes on. One had a fearful "drunkard's mask," and the other was an undersized, half-starved shrimp with a Bardolphean nose. Directly they caught sight of Lord Roberts they moved quickly to the kerb,

stood rigidly at attention, and, as he passed, gave the military salute.

The great Field-Marshal gravely turned his head and acknowledged the salute as punctiliously as he would have done had they been in the uniform it was evident they had once worn.

Of all that crowd, those two—the meanest-looking—were the only ones who knew and honoured the great little man.

Newnham-Davis was the perfect type—the best type—of a man-about-town; the title "Clubman" under which he wrote for the *Sketch* fitted him like a uniform.

At the Naval and Military he was the soldier, with a story to tell of South Africa or Simla; at the Garrick he was the playwright and dramatic critic, discussing the traditions and humours of the theatre; and at the Beefsteak he was the recognised authority on what to eat, drink and avoid. I have heard him described as "the most versatile man in London," and I know no one of his period who could have contested his right to that description. Military training had made him a disciplinarian, but never a martinet. It had also given him a knowledge and understanding of men, all of which attributes helped to constitute him an ideal editor in the type of journalism that amused him, the most loyal of comrades, and the most trustworthy of partners. In his appointments he was punctual to the minute, in his dealings he was essentially just—whenever he erred it was from kindness and consideration.

As one who was associated with him for a good many years—and some of them very trying years—perhaps I have the right to speak.

His military career was much more active and exciting than many of his readers, and, indeed, many of his acquaintances, imagined, because he was little given to talking, and still less to writing, of his personal exploits.

He went through some stiff fighting in the Transvaal and Zululand; the part he took at the battle of Isandula and at Rorke's Drift earned for him a medal and clasp, and he was twice mentioned in dispatches.

It was typical of Dwarf that whenever he could be induced to talk of those South African days, he confined himself to amusing stories.

Once, when scouting with a troop of men, he came close to the territory of a disaffected chief. Strict orders had been given that bloodshed was to be avoided, as far as it was possible, so

Captain Davis (as he was then) sent the chief a message commanding him to remain loyal to the British, or there would be trouble.

One morning he heard a commotion outside his tent, and, going to enquire the cause, he found a wagon, in which the chief was seated, with six dusky beauties.

"What's all this?" demanded the young soldier, and was informed that the chief, terrified by the fierce message, had come in to surrender, accompanied by his wives. Davis had no authority to detain the captives, and had not the faintest idea of what to do with the much-married chief and his retinue, so, concealing his emotions, he read him a stiff lecture through an interpreter, and concluded by telling him to go home and be a good boy.

"But I can't go home. My nephew is now chief!" expostulated the self-made prisoner.

"Well, go back and tell him to get out. And if he wont, tell him I'll jolly well make him!"

Which settled the business, much to the relief of the young Captain of the Buffs.

Long before he retired from the Army he was dabbling in journalism, and when Lennard was editing the *Man of the World* in 1889 he was one of the regular contributors.

His epicurean tastes developed while he was in the Army.

As Mess President of the Buffs, he became deservedly popular, and took pride in the discovery of new dishes and cheap drinks. On one occasion he happened to get hold of a consignment of champagne, which he knew to be an excellent brand and vintage, although not then one of the well-known brands. (It afterwards became famous and expensive). The low price he had paid for it became known, and the subalterns, after tasting it, complained that the stuff was undrinkable. Not to be beaten, Newnham-Davis, with the assistance of the mess-serjeant, washed the labels off the bottles and substituted those of a popular brand.

"At last! This is something like! Best wine we've ever drunk! A little bit better than that filthy hogwash! etc., etc." were the verdicts, and Dwarf grinned.

Not until the last bottle was consumed did he give away the secret. His reputation as a connoisseur was established, and never again questioned.

In his Service days Dwarf's lines fell among gourmets, and

during the Zulu War in the 80th Regiment—with Dan Tucker as Senior Major—there was a good gourmet who was just as plump as Nature intends all good gourmets to be.

They were not too well fed during that campaign, for ship's biscuit and trek ox beef were the daily portion, and the souls of the epicures yearned for higher things. News came into camp one day that Oham, Cetewayo's brother, had surrendered and there was much talk over the significance of his act. Presently, from his tent, emerged the plump gourmet, wearing an expression of pleasurable excitement:

"What's this about a ham being brought into camp?" he asked with the liveliest interest.

And when on the subject of the ruling passion, Dwarf could quote a culinary hint of no little value.

The brother of the late Sir John Astley lay sick unto death, and a few old chums gathered at his bedside for a last interview and some parting words. And amongst other things he said:

"Bear in mind that three things,—not two,—are absolute certainties. Death and Quarter Day are common parables, but it is not generally known that it's a million to one on crab against lobster sauce with a turbot. God bless you. Goodbye!"

For long Dwarf's birthday parties were functions.

As he would himself explain, he was born at midnight between Guy Fawkes Day and the day of the battle of Inkerman, and it was his custom to keep one birthday, the Inkerman one, with entire respectability in the bosom of his family, and the other in Bohemia in proper Guy Fawkes fashion.

At one birthday party he collected as many of his editor friends as were not afraid to dine out, and John Corlett, à Beckett, who was then running *John Bull*—not Bottomley's paper—Frank Boyd and Douglas Straight, responded to the call, with Bob Martin and one or two other bright conversationalists to talk to them.

Another Guy Fawkes birthday party was graced with the presence of some of the most beautiful ladies of the Gaiety company, with George Edwardes as the star guest. There was a miniature barrel of gunpowder in the centre of the table, with a candle burning on it, and everybody had in front of him or her a little doll in costume, representing one of the guests. Edwardes' doll wore his racing colours, Bob Martin's doll was an Irishman, and so on.

The improvement which has been so noticeable in London restaurants during the last twenty-five years was in no small measure due to Colonel Newnham-Davis and his writings.

Since the days of George Augustus Sala, no one has written so voluminously or so learnedly about the art of the kitchen and the subtleties of the table, and the Dwarf far surpassed Sala in personal experience. Whenever he ate a good dinner, he published the menu, and he never hesitated to criticise. After writing a series on "Dinners and Diners" in 1899, he produced two more comprehensive works, "The Gourmet's Guide to London" and "The Gourmet's Guide to Europe," in neither of which would he permit any restaurant or hotel advertisements. Lennard was at that time living in Belgium, and was asked to contribute the chapters on Belgian restaurants with which he was familiar.

As a constructor of ballets and writer of plays, he had several successes; "A Day in Paris" ran for over a year at the Empire, and out of the proceeds of "Lady Madcap" he built the "Chalet Madcap" at Le Touquet.

Notwithstanding his many social and commercial engagements, he managed to get through an enormous amount of journalistic work. In addition to writing the "Clubman" article in the *Sketch*, he contributed a long news letter every week for many years to an Indian paper. He edited *Town Topics* after Pitcher's death and wrote many columns for it every week. Until he rejoined the Army, soon after the outbreak of war, he was a regular dramatic critic, and seldom missed a first night.

When appointed an officer of the military guard at Alexandra Palace, he had to change the routine of his life in many ways, and the strain was too great. He was the last man to grumble about his health, but for several years he had been compelled to take a "cure" at Carlsbad or Marienbad every summer, and would often take periodical rests at a nursing-home. The war killed him, as it killed tens of thousands of other good men, good companions, and good friends.

The journalists who shaped his course when he first laid down his sword and took up the pen as a profession all spoke of the then editor of *Punch* as "Frank."

He was "Frank" to John Corlett, who was his contemporary, and he was "Frank" to à Beckett, who introduced Davis to him, and "Frank" to Douglas Straight—newly back from

India—editing the *Pall Mall Magazine* with Lord Freddie Hamilton, and he was "Frank" to half the world of the very pleasant society that clusters round the theatre.

A year before the Dwarf retired from the Service, on going back from leave to India, he had been asked by Corlett, if he carried out his intention of retiring, to come to him and take a hand in the editorship of whatever papers he happened to be interested in. Shirley Brooks, who had been John's right-hand man on the "Pink 'Un," was dead, and Alfred Allison reigned in his stead. Editors of the *Man of the World* followed each other, but found the paper, run as Corlett wished it run, a very stiff project to hoist into a circulation.

A walk up and down the lawns of Bottombarley—a walk every member of the old staff knew well—resulted in Davis joining Pitcher in the editorship of the *Man of the World* with some military dialogues and the first chapters of "Jadoo" as literary baggage, and making "Round the Town" a feature of the "Pink 'Un."

Sir Douglas Straight liked "Round the Town," and asked Davis, at a later period, when editing the *Pall Mall Gazette*, to write a series of articles on restaurants, "Dinners and Diners" being the result. Burnand and à Beckett were ever looking out for fresh blood for *Punch*, and à Beckett, who was a keen militiaman, thinking that "Military Dialogues" had actuality and humour in them, brought Burnand and Davis together.

At first the acquaintance was not on the business side. They met often at Burnand's house in the Boltons; the editor a delightful white-moustached boy, full of fun, and not at all above a practical joke, surrounded by his wife and daughters, who all idolised him, an excellent conversationalist, who, having thought out a book of reminiscences, had all his good stories marshalled under their proper heads.

Meanwhile à Beckett had confided to Davis his difficulties on *Punch*, and told him of the intimation he had received from the authorities that he would do well to confine his activities to the articles he signed "A Briefless Junior." à Beckett resigned, and, as men who have been on the staff of *Punch* generally do, got to work to produce a paper that would be better than *Punch*.

John Bull was the unclaimed title taken by à Beckett and there was an inaugural dinner at which everyone but Dwarf made a speech. The paper was named before it was born, and I do not think it ever came into the world.

Meanwhile Sir Frank had also opened negotiations with Davis, and asked him to write some military dialogues for *Punch*, after the first two telling him to send all military work direct to the printers. Dwarf told Corlett of this, and he grunted.

Old John's method of letting Davis know that he did not like to read his work in *Punch* was one Friday at lunch to tell him that he knew what a good thing it was for any writer to be of Mr. Punch's Round Table, and that he wished to do nothing to prevent him from obtaining that coveted position. He was told exactly how matters stood and was satisfied.

Burnand's surprise when he learned that John Corlett thought he was poaching was quite genuine.

About this time Burnand told Dwarf, as à Beckett had done, of his difficulties with the proprietors of *Punch*. He had in his mind arranged his future, when he would retire, and on what pension he would retire, and he was vexed when he received a letter from the proprietors suggesting other arrangements.

Lunching one Thursday at the Garrick Club, Davis found Burnand there, his breast-pocket bulging with papers, and he told Dwarf that he had come there to see him and ask his opinion as a man of the world.

After lunch in the dark little Strangers' Room, Davis pored over the letters; heard what So-and-So had said to So-and-So at a *Punch* dinner, and what So-and-So had said in return regarding impending changes, and of a discourtesy which was obviously unintentional on the part of the firm. Sir Frank was very much in earnest, and at one period of the talk, Dwarf thought that he was about to be asked to carry a challenge.

Burnand, finding his advice pacific, left him suddenly, with all the papers in his hands. Davis sent them back to him and heard no more on that subject.

Sir Frank took a kindly interest in *Town Topics*, and on the first anniversary of its existence sent a little poem of good wishes on a post-card addressed to the staff. The poem was not a long one, but was typical of the old man's kindliness. Here it is:

"Kind remembrance to 'T. T.'
"Yours sincerely F. C. B.
"76 *tout complet.*"

It became a standing joke against Dwarf that, when on the outbreak of war he returned to the Army and was placed in charge of interned Germans at Alexandra Palace, by some curious coincidence his little flock of Huns comprised some of the most famous *chefs* and *maitres d'hotel* in London, and the staff used to write him formal letters of complaint, protesting at the inferior quality of the food in their usual restaurants.

One publishing day Dwarf came down to the office, and told us with glee the story of an interned waiter who escaped in the night, lay for twenty-four hours concealed in some bushes within sight of the camp, and, unable to bear the pangs of hunger any longer—or, as we alleged, overcome with memories of the Lucullan feasts of the interned, and realising that there was not a decent *chef* outside Alexandra Palace—attempted to *break back* into prison, and was very nearly shot in the act.

Another amusing experience occurred to him when escorting a bunch of " interned " to the Isle of Man.

Owing to submarines, the sea-journey took eight or ten hours longer than had been anticipated, and food ran out. When the boat at last reached harbour, the starving prisoners were in a state of mutiny, and flatly refused to land without breakfast.

Things threatened to become unpleasant, but, with immense tact, the kind-hearted old " Gastronomer Royal " promised to buy breakfast out of his own pocket for the first fifty men ashore.

That disembarcation was a record one.

XV

SWEARS AND SWELLS

Jimmy Davis, Solicitor—His Clerk—Ernest Wells—The Junior Clerk's Correspondence—The Amateur Sleuth—" References to West End Solicitor "—" Swears " and His Clubs—" The Thieves' Kitchen "—Rising to Emergencies—The Golden Rule—A Contested Bill—The Melancholy Jew—The Unprofitable Member—Greatness Discounted—Sam Lewis—Max Malini and the Steak—Athletic Appetites—Rigid Economy—Jack Johnson, Trencherman—The Fallen King—Swears as Author—A Collaboration with Hall Caine—The Dreams and Visions Stakes—Arthur Collins and Mrs. " Pat "—Barney Barnato—Clubs and Club-promoting—" Wells's."

IN the days when Jimmy Davis was " soliciting "—as he was wont to describe his days in the law—at offices in Conduit Street, Regent Street, W., his practice, though not extensive, interested him mightily, for his clients were mostly stage folk, and the theatre had already an irresistible lure for him. His ambition was to write a play for the Gaiety, and the more he devoted himself to theatrical literature, the more did his legal stock decline.

One of his three clerks was a tall youth of fifteen, who contrived to support existence on a somewhat slender income, being a living contradiction of the axiom that happiness does not dwell in empty pockets. Frequently young Ernest Wells—such was his name—was to be seen during gaslight hours supporting Mr. Chairman Rouse, at the Oxford Music Hall, or exchanging opinions of weight and moment with Mr. Emil Loibl, at the London Pavilion, but all his demeanour at the office lent colour to the popular belief that after partaking of a substantial meat tea he passed the evening at halma or patience.

On two or three occasions when calling at the office on his way home to breakfast after a long night at écarté, the solicitor was struck by the somewhat singular fact that while the letter-box contained a bare dozen or so letters for the head of the firm, the junior clerk's correspondence ran into two or three score—addressed to that young gentleman by initials—and he came to the not unreasonable conclusion that the youth was advertising for a more remunerative position. Weeks rolled by, and the

letters came tumbling merrily in; the junior clerk gave no intimation of a proposed "change," but, as the spring advanced, blossomed out in at least three new suits of the smartest season's cut and finish, and also developed a pretty taste in ties and silk handkerchiefs.

One day an amateur sleuth came up to the solicitor as he was absorbing his mid-day chop at Blanchard's in Beak Street, and asked him if he had seen the "Exchange and Mart." He hadn't, but was soon deeply interested in the following advertisement:

"Who will be the first to send me three-and-sixpence for my costly and magnificent real aluminium gold telescope pencil-case, full of lead at both ends, a duplicate birthday present? References to West End solicitor. Or would exchange for Cock Canary (in song) or second volume of 'Jack Harkaway's School-days.' W. care Solicitor, 232, Conduit Street, Old Bond Street, W."

"After all," wheezed Swears, telling the story in after life, "the bally pencils cost me tenpence a piece! Wasn't I straighter than another kid in Great Marlborough Street, who was advertising at the same time, from his governor's office, a 'box containing two hundred bright and useful articles for ladies of all ages, for two-and-six,' and who, on copping the sex's half-dollars, sent 'em back by return of post—a small packet of pins?"

As a club proprietor Swears became famous in the London which amuses itself, and, surrounded throughout his life by "characters," he was himself the greatest "character" of them all. The story of the Pelican has been told often enough, and it was some time after its fall—Swears was miserable without a club of some sort—that he again tempted fortune with the City Athenæum, which soon became known as the "Thieves' Kitchen."

It was no doubt his extensive and peculiar knowledge of the world which caused old Swears to rise to emergencies with a promptitude that was at times startling in its efficiency.

In the peaceful calm of a Sabbath morning soon after the opening of his last club—"Wells'," in Old Bond Street—Pitcher and I sat with Swears in the cosy little place, and dealt in polite conversation. (Sterne, I think, defined conversation as the traffic in which the dabbler with the least knowledge gets bested in the end.) Swears had just asked Pitcher whether he

did not consider it likely that so many journalists rejoiced so frequently at not being utter failures that they had no time to worry about success, and Pitch had replied coldly that he did not think that these unfortunates exceeded in number the club-promoters who, from inability in the days of their adolescence to say "No, thank you! I've just had one," had doomed themselves to a middle-age of unsweetened rice pudding, when the telephone bell rang sharply, and a club servant brought Swears a 'phoned message from a noble Guardsman.

"Captain Lord X has rung up to say, sir, that he went on guard in such a hurry this morning that he forgot to put any money in his pocket. He says will you send him down a few sovereigns, as he is in the Bank of England with one penny!"

The sheer horror of such a situation greatly agitated Swears, and he could not have despatched five pounds to Threadneedle Street with greater promptitude had be been an international financier stemming a market panic.

In his more expansive moments Swears would boast that he had discovered the golden rule for successful club management: "Never contradict a member, but always circumvent him." And the worth of the rule may be appraised by a single instance.

When he was running the little lunching club in the City—an establishment where the shilling chop, the corner-stone of England's commercial greatness, was the standing dish—one mid-day, as the rush was at its highest, the proprietor was brusquely called to the table of a millionaire Jewish broker, who, pointing to the grilled section of sheep before him, demanded angrily:

"Look here, Swears, do you call this thing a chop?"

"Cert'nly not," replied Swears promptly, with inimitably acted disgust, "give it to me; I'll see to this for you!"

With that he grabbed the plate—dashed to the kitchen—turned the chop over with the cook's tongs, and—brought it down again.

"Ah," said the member with the mollified air of one who sees that a just complaint has been graciously and promptly dealt with, "now that is something like a chop! Many thanks, old fellow—many thanks."

Whereupon Swears, returning to the kitchen, called the cook and admonished him emphatically.

"You damn fool," he said with immense sternness, "*always* serve a chop with the concave side underneath!"

It was at the Thieves' Kitchen that one day a caller found Swears arguing hotly with one of his members, a gentleman of the Jewish persuasion, over an item in the latter's luncheon bill.

"I don't care what you say, dear old thing," Swears was protesting asthmatically. "I don't care what you say; I call ninepence for beef sausages damn cheap, even for a Jew!"

"But I brought 'em myself!" cried the member. "They're my own sausages; he only had to cook 'em, and there's nothing *like* ninepennorth of coal in cooking sausages!"

"That's not for *coal*, dear old boy," replied Swears promptly, "that's the usual charge for—er—for *skinnage*."

And there was one of the chosen race, than whom there was no more sorrowful-looking man in the House.

"What d'you call that melancholy Jew?" asked a stranger in the Thieves' Kitchen, curious as to the nicknames of celebrities.

"Oh, him?" whispered Swears, with an imitation of important secrecy, "we call him Lachrymoses."

And it was on an occasion of rare pessimism towards the close of the Thieves' Kitchen days that Swears almost—but not quite—decided to expel a wealthy financier.

"No, he's not much good to us," remarked the club proprietor moodily. "His eighteenpenny lunch costs me three and ninepence, and he's always late with his subscription, and he scares all the waiters, and writes about four pages of the complaint book every day. Up before the Committee he comes to-morrow, or I'll—I'll resign my position."

In the palmy days of the Thieves' Kitchen, desirable as it might seem to be the presumably affluent controller of the only notable luncheon club beneath the classic shadow of the Stock Exchange, Swears found that even such greatness might be rudely discounted.

For instance.

In the front of the best box at the new Gaiety show sat Swears, wearing the glossiest of shirts and spotless white gloves, his neck craned to catch the lightest wish of the youngest bud of the lighter stage seated beside him. In the second row of the stalls were two of the hottest "nuts" in the Kaffir market; and these were the words that arose to the vigilant ears of Swears:

"Only look at him, up in Box D, and think of him handin' round the mustard in the club to-morrow, and askin' you if you have all you want!"

"It's our own fault, Ike, it's our own fault," replied the other resignedly; "not only do we never stop to check our bills, but we ought to stick out against payin' that twopence for table-money!"

And to think, Swears groaned, that it wasn't his treat at all, but a box the dear little soul had been given by the management.

Talking of the Thieves' Kitchen.

Some little time before his death Sam Lewis the moneylender—or rather, the prince among money-lenders—became a member of the City Athenæum Club, and Swears, with true proprietorial seductiveness, shoved a five years' banker's order before him, with the purely considerate idea of saving him the trouble of drawing a cheque annually for his subscription. Sam signed it, and had just entered upon his second or third year's membership when he died, and to his principal executor it seemed a sin and a shame that the Thieves' Kitchen had drawn five guineas out of the estate only on the previous day. So the deceased's solicitor called on Swears in Angel Court.

"You have heard the sad news, Mr. Swears?"

"Yes, yes—rest his soul!" answered Swears, reverently, lowering his gaze, and inwardly resolving to sack the man who had varnished his boots that morning.

"He was a member of this club, I find?"

"Oh yes, dear old thing, everybody loved him down here—rest his soul in peace!"

"It appears that his last subscription was only paid yesterday,—when, in fact, he was already beyond human aid."

"Ah, how sad! Oloversholom—I hope that's the correct word?"

"And I felt that I had only to call your attention to that fact for you to instruct your secretary to return me the amount?"

And Swears' mobile features at once assumed an air of affectionate solicitude.

"No," he said quietly, but very, very firmly; "no. Dear old Sam—may he rest in peace!—would never have respected me if he had thought me capable of such a thing as *that*!"

Certainly they did understand the art of procuring and cooking steaks at the Thieves' Kitchen.

Try as he might among the alleged chophouses in the Strand, little Max Malini, the Austro-American entertainer, could not get another juicy, underdone inch-thick steak such as Swears had given him in the City, and the standard charred and gravyless chunk of trek-ox filled his soul with bitterness. But wandering along the Strand he struck an imposing hostelry with a real grill; wherefore he entered and called up a bright-looking waiter:

"See here," he commanded, in his quaint Austro-American jargon, "don'd dake der order if you can'd deliver der goods. I want a real bloody steak."

For an instant the waiter stood aghast; then, with a vulgar leer, he answered:

"I tumble. Any bloody potatoes?"

Rare, even in the City, the land of gargantuan feasting and indigestible revelry, is such hospitality seen as that which the undefeated Swears extended in that same Thieves' Kitchen to a certain Yankee wrestler.

Three quarts of Scotch broth, a four pound porterhouse steak, garnished with two pounds of onions, a partridge, twelve pancakes, and a "savoury," consisting of a yard of French bread, toasted, and spread with twenty-two sardines did the proprietor vow formed that wrestler's meal.

"Is there anything else I can offer you?" said Ernest, as the Apollo's jaws stopped.

"Wal," drawled the Leviathan, "seein' it's just 'bout five o'clock, how would a pint o' tea an' a couple of soft boiled eggs go?"

No wonder that at times even the undefeatable one became pessimistic, and in a certain time of City slackness Swears became woefully gloomy.

"No," he groaned one evening in the Alhambra to Pitch and myself, "nobody ever gives one of the old-time lunches now! Everybody down in the City is rigidly economical—oh, it's dreadful. Why, when one of the best boys in the House sat down and ordered a half-crown sole for his lunch the other day, I give you my word that the members present rushed out to fetch the members who were absent to come in and have a look at the only 'bull' in the whole of the City! Oh, it's dreadful—but never mind; drop in and taste some of my old Pelican whisky. Isn't it beautiful?—doesn't it revive memories of dear

old Denman Street!—lovely—I'm going to make you make a lot of money next week, dear old things—"

Professional wrestlers are not the only big eaters.

Not only in the ring, but as comedian—before he attained swelled head—and as trencherman, the black, Jack Johnson, was, when in his prime, in a class of his own.

I remember a turn at the Palladium—for some charity I fancy—in which he boxed one round with George Robey; an inimitable piece of fooling. But Johnson's marvellous knowledge of distance was never better exemplified than when missing Robey by a hair's breadth, he himself fell a deliberate victim to every wild swing by the actor, and the lightness of his falls would have made a professional acrobat jealous. And as a trencherman he could have given even old John Corlett a run, and made a race of it.

At a certain dinner given to him by some admirers, he devoured the whole of six chickens, washing it down with generous libations of old ale. There seems an awful monotony about so much fowl.

"Well, and how did it go afterwards?" asked an anxious enquirer, fearing the effects of a surfeit.

"Oh, fine!" said the big black imperturbably.

Johnson seemed sublimely unconscious of having broken any record, but calmly poured down whiskies and sodas for the rest of the evening, without showing the slightest signs of any ill-effect.

And one guest at least came to the conclusion that it was small wonder that the "big fellow" was then master of what he must have regarded as an over-civilised and effete race.

But there was at times a genial tolerance for the effete white about Johnson, and I once heard him admit that the proudest moment of his life was when he shook hands with the plump little ex-King Manoel of Portugal, who had just previously undergone the uncomfortable ceremony of dethronement.

"I may be on'y a niggah," Johnson explained, "but I'v nevah been hard on a fellah just cos' he's fallen! No, *suh*!"

Pitcher always vowed that poor old Swears was at his best and noblest as an author, and after the success of the "Pink 'Un and a Pelican" there was nothing Ernest did not feel up to in the ink-slinging line.

On one memorable occasion he posted out hotfoot to Pitcher's private residence in a state of wild excitment,—positively

bursting with an idea,—and when I met Pitch later in the week he seemed worried.

"What am I to do with old Swears about this?" he asked. "He drove up last Sunday to tell me he'd met Hall Caine at supper, had been asked his opinion of 'The Bondman,' and had replied that it was all very well from a literary standpoint, of course, but didn't quite stay home as a play, but that if he (Caine) would make room for us in the next commission, he thought it was any odds on Drury Lane getting a play that would 'connect.'

"'I told him,' added Swears, 'that he could be 'Camille'—I mean, he could be the one that was 'featured'—with his name first on the bills and advertisements: 'By Hall Caine, Pitcher and Swears'—like that; because it didn't matter a damn to us; our public would recognise *our* stuff, even if his didn't register one in ten.'"

Strange to say, the collaboration never matured, and so the play was never written!

But just about that time Hall Caine must have been getting used to shocks, although it was said that the little Manxman's most troubled expression was worn one evening, when, with Arthur Collins, he walked over from a rehearsal at the Lane to the Tivoli, and passed through the crowded promenade to listen to Fragson. Said one racing gent, who had been imbibing freely, to his pal:

"Charlie, have I had six Scotches too many, or is it that I'm runnin' in the 'Dreams an' Visions Stakes'? Here comes old Bill Shakespeare in a top hat!"

And lest it should seem churlish to relate what follows, ponder, dear reader, the sheer impossibility of smothering so gentle a morsel. It was the first rehearsal of that autumn melodrama at Drury Lane, and the author had ventured a few suggestions to the leading lady. Said he:

"At the speech beginning: 'None can say you're wrong' I should like you to stand just about here. You don't mind, do you?"

"Oh, dear no, Mr. Caine," replied Mrs. Pat Campbell with much sweetness; "my greatest desire is to achieve success for *your* sake. By the way, have you ever written anything before?"

At that same rehearsal Arthur Collins came off better than his author when Mrs. Pat interrupted proceedings to ask the

manager what relationship the two children she had, in the play, to take upstairs were supposed to hold to her.

Arthur Collins never moved an eye-lid.

"Uncle and aunt," he answered. "Get on with the rehearsal!"

Swears' experience of clubs and of club-promoting was a long and varied one. When he founded the "Pelican" some thirty years ago he brought a new zest into the West End Bohemia of the day: the club was the resort of princes, peers, kings of finance, sporting celebrities, and fashionable actors, who assembled in the small hours to see champions fight in gloves for big prizes.

His last venture, to which he gave his name, was "Wells'" in Bond Street, at the corner of Old Bond Street and Burlington Gardens. The Earl of Lonsdale was the president, and on the Committee were Prince Leopold of Battenberg, the Duke of Westminster, Lord Brooke, Lord Edward Grosvenor and other notable names, and for a time the club prospered exceedingly. In the pre-war days every type of man about town was to be found in Wells', from a Prince of the Blood to racing "characters," from George Graves to smart young nonentities who wanted to pick up the latest story. And in the window, with its wonderful view of Bond Street, looking north, would sit old Swears for hours, cracking jokes and telling stories in his queer husky voice.

When Swears died, "Skipper" Ward, helped by Lord Lascelles, took over the club, but the glory was slowly departing, and even the famous flat mince pie and the cygnet,—those two club dishes with which an attempt was made to create a gastronomic tradition,—failed to keep things going. A fire in the August of 1923, which badly damaged the clubhouse, proved the club's undoing, and although for a time the members were kept together at a similar sort of club in Clarges Street, the difficulties in the way of finding new premises proved too great, and so the last institution founded by Swears passed out; the furniture was sold, and the collection of sporting and other prints, famous in clubland, was dispersed.

XVI

ROI D'ATOUT

Necessary Versatility—Lennard's Roles—Tom Hood—*Fun*—Henry Sampson—George R. Sims—The Literary Poacher—The First Play—Johnny Toole—Arthur Roberts—" The Lady's Pictorial "—Mrs. Bernard Beere—Shadowing Leyds—Tapping the Cables—The " Ten Guns " Message—The Novelty Theatre—" Lalla Rookh "—Gus Harris—Stefano Gatti and the Horse Race—The Stage Damager—George Edwardes' Only Pantomime—The Gaiety Guv'nor—Ideas and Enterprises—Old Servants—" Dorothy "—Racing—Choosing the Colours—A Curious Venture—Louis Bradfield's " Presentation "—" Mikestein "—Avoirdupois v. Sterling—Diplomacy—Lionel Monckton——The Commanding Lady—The Gaiety Standard—Description as a Fine Art—Edwardes and " The Belle of New York "—Edna May—Turf Characters—" Flash Fred "—A " Shakedown "—Luck—High Play.

THE men of John Corlett's staff were of necessity versatile, for the old man had a cherished conviction that the prestige of a post on the " Pink 'Un " and a Romano lunch each publishing day were a set-off to a somewhat small financial remuneration. And there was no more versatile member of that staff than Horace Lennard, whose *nom de plume* " Roi d'Atout," was promptly corrupted by Pitcher into " Rooty Tooty."

There was little connected with journalism, however remotely, that Lennard could not do, and do well. He wrote pantomime for Drury Lane; a farce of his, " Namesake," was played by old Johnny Toole over a thousand times; a brilliant racing journalist, he succeeded Edward Spencer as Corlett's understudy with the " Note Book," and was subsequently racing editor of *Town Topics*; a writer of graceful children's verse; a political writer—during the war he was the *Mail's* lobby correspondent; a *fin gourmet*,—he was responsible for the chapters on Belgian restaurants in Newnham-Davis' " Gourmet's Guide to Europe "; Paris correspondent; theatrical manager—to every rôle he played, Lennard brought a limitless energy and a fine ability.

As a schoolboy he sent Tom Hood, then editing *Fun*, some

verses, and Hood's encouragement to continue decided his career. Charles H. Ross, the editor of *Judy* and creator of *Ally Slopper*, was also kind to the boy poet, and, as he grew older, the light-hearted Bohemians who were making laughter for London were all familiar to him.

Born in the Forest of Dean in 1858, Lennard's parents were rigid Nonconformists, and he used to say that his first visit to a theatre was at the comparatively mature age of sixteen, when he saw a pantomime at Covent Garden,—and promptly decided to write a pantomime himself.

When Tom Hood died, Henry Sampson became editor of *Fun*, and on his staff were George R. Sims, Richard Butler. Henry Chance Newton, and others who enlisted under his banner when he left the Dalziels to start the *Referee*, which, by the way, was first published from the office of the *Weekly Dispatch* in Wine Office Court. But Lennard's memory of Sims went back further than the days of *Fun*. Sims' father was a furniture manufacturer in Aldersgate Street, and his mother was a philanthropic lady, and a shining light in some religious sect to which an uncle of Lennard's also belonged, and it was through this religious connection that the future Dagonet and "Pink 'Un" first became acquainted.

When Sims started a paper of his own—*One and All*—Lennard was a contributor. The editor's chief contribution to the short-lived bantling was a serial story "Rogues and Vagabonds," the leading incidents of which he used for his drama, "The Lights o' London," at the Princess's, and which his contributor and Wallis Mackay promptly burlesqued in "The Delights of London," produced at the old Philharmonic, with Marie Linden and Percy Everard in the cast.

But it was for old Johnny Toole that the "Pink 'Un" wrote his first piece for the stage. Lennard used to describe it smilingly as only a very little piece by a very little chap.

Always in and out of the bandbox theatre in King William Street, and up and down the staircase which led to the stage and the "gnv'nor's" dressing-room, he dreamed of the time when he should provide the popular comedian of the day with a part. It was at Toole's Theatre that he first met Phil May, just up from Leeds, and doing theatrical portraits at a guinea a time, and May was present when Lennard let off at George Loveday, like a bomb, the announcement:

"I've written a farce!"

"Give it to Billington and get him to read it," was Loveday's reply.

Billington, Toole's stage manager, read it, liked it, said it was just what they wanted—but not for Toole.

That was the first disappointment.

Toole sent for the author to his room, and after the inevitable "What will you have, dear boy?" explained that he did not want to study any more parts himself—he had his repertoire—but wanted a first piece for his company. Pinero had written him a comedietta, "Hester's Mystery," which he intended to put on whenever he was playing in a comic part afterwards; but he wanted something as a prelude to his sentimental pieces—a rollicking farce to precede "Uncle Dick's Darling" and plays of that kind—"and Billington says your piece is just the thing. So, see George, arrange the price, and I'll buy it."

In the present days of big author's fees the price demanded and paid for "Namesakes" would seem preposterous, but the young author was delighted, and the piece was a success, for it was played over a thousand times. The present royalty system has its merits—for authors.

Poor Toole; towards the close of his life, the incarnate tragic-comedian! One by one, those he loved were taken from him, and his health broke. Just before his last serious illness, Lennard was in the wings of the little Prince of Wales' Theatre in Liverpool, with Arthur Roberts, who was appearing in the "Pink 'Un's" burlesque "Too Lovely Black-Eyed Susan."

"Isn't that Johnny Toole in a box on the O.P. side?" said Arthur.

It was—and all alone. He was trying to hide behind the curtains, but Roberts and Rooty carried him off, after the play, to the Grand Hotel. As the three sat in the big smoking-room about two in the morning—like his beloved friend Irving, Toole was a late sitter—his face grew suddenly sad.

"I can't stop here any longer," he exclaimed, "the room is full of ghosts."

It was the hotel he had always stayed at in the old days, and he saw old friends in the empty chairs.

"Come away! Come with me to the Adelphi."

In a fresh room at the Adelphi he saw no ghosts, and he kept his guests up with stories and jokes till dawn.

In every sense of the word old Toole was a good man.

HORACE LENNARD
"Roi d'Atout

Generous to a fault, his benevolence knew no bounds. My old colleague was secretary for several memorable theatrical benefits, among them those given to Meyer Lutz, Nellie Farren and Teddy Payne, and he always told me that Toole's cheque was the first to come to hand—unsolicited. The very day the Farren benefit was announced he sent £10, "for a seat in the gallery."

During the South African war Lennard was living in Brussels, engaged in the interesting work of "shadowing" Dr. Leyds, and his "shadowing" had some important results.

About a month before the outbreak of war, chance had thrown in his way three of Leyds' young men, two of whom were Boers —Eloff and Smit—and the third an Anglo-Dutchman. Young Eloff was a nephew of Kruger, and a patriotic young Boer of the best type, and, on the declaration of war, he started for the Transvaal, but did not get to the front. That he was removed from the ship at Cape Town was due to Lennard, who was then engaged in collecting material for a series of articles on the Transvaal Secret Service for the *Globe*, and who had made it his business to cultivate relations with Leyds' intimates.

Lennard had taken rooms in the Rue de Florence, exactly opposite Leyds' residence, and also hired another room in the Rue de Livourne which enabled him to look right down into the Transvaal agents' office. When war broke out, Leyds put up a plate on his front door announcing that the office was that of the "Chancellerie" of the Legation of the South African Republic, had gold braid sewn on his dress suit, and posed as a full blown Minister and Plenipotentiary. The plate soon came off—it adorned the door of Corlett's room at 52, Fleet Street, until the building was pulled down.

The "Pink 'Un" kept Dr. Leyds under observation day and night, and little took place at the "Chancellerie" that escaped his notice. He got to know all the people in the pay of the "Plenipotentiary," the newspapers he was subsidising, and was also able to put the British Government on the track of some of his investments. One morning, the observer noticed flags flying outside the house, people were coming and going, and there were signs of unusual animation and a jubilant excitement. Evidently something had happened. Lennard knew that at ten o'clock the Anglo-Dutchman went regularly to a coiffeur's at the end of the street, so made his way there.

"You seem lively at the factory this morning," he remarked. "What's up?"

"Haven't you heard?" answered Leyds' henchman. "Buller's had a crushing defeat on the Tugela—been driven back and *abandoned ten guns*. You'll read all about it in the special *Petit Bleu* that'll be up directly."

(The *Petit Bleu* was one of the papers subsidised by Leyds.)

Lennard telegraphed to the *Globe* an account of Leyds' celebrations of a "great Boer victory" and received a reply that nothing was known in London of Buller's defeat, and, when the London papers came in at four o'clock there was no word in them of any disaster. The London evening papers were also silent, but the morning papers on the following day contained the news that Buller had been compelled to retreat and had been unable to save *ten of his guns*.

The question naturally arose, how did Leyds in Brussels obtain possession of the news so many hours before it was known in London? It was always supposed that he was making use of the consular codes, and got information through the Portuguese Consul at Lourenco Marques, but it turned out that a message received through that source contained no mention of the guns, and it later became clear that the Boers themselves,—though, of course, they knew that they had driven Buller back,—were unaware of the number of the guns he had left behind him.

Madge of the *Globe*, took the matter up keenly after the "Pink 'Un" had satisfied him that the news was known in Brussels before ten in the morning. After pressure on the authorities he learnt that the information was in the Colonial Office early in the morning, but had been held back in order to prevent the newsboys calling "Another British Reverse!" on the streets. It was thought advisable to let the tidings of the disaster dribble out quietly at the breakfast table.

The suppression led to an important discovery.

The news published in London coincided exactly with the news published in Brussels twenty-four hours previously; in both accounts the *ten guns* were mentioned. The cables from the Boer side mentioned no guns, and it was at once suspected, therefore, that the British message had been tapped by someone knowing the code, or that an agent in the pay of Leyds had access to the messages received at the Colonial Office. Leyds had spies everywhere.

The matter was thoroughly investigated, and such precautions were taken that no leakage of the same kind ever occurred again.

Had the publication of the cable not been withheld by the Authorities, it might never have been found out that a certain Dutchman in London was able to get possession of important secret information.

On the site of the Kingsway Theatre in the merry 'eighties, stood the little Novelty, a house with happy associations for Horace Lennard.

"Has my sister gone stark, staring mad?" exclaimed Gus Harris, when he heard that Nelly Harris had taken the Novelty Theatre. Nelly was at that time wardrobe mistress of the Lane, but, following the bent of the family, wanted a theatre of her own. Kate Vaughan was then in her zenith, and she had just made a big hit as Cinderella at Drury Lane. Nellie Harris secured her as her first "star."

Augustus was indignant and prophesied disaster, but blood's stronger than water, as Charlie Harris used to say, and after Nelly and Kate nearly made a mess of it with old English comedies, Gus came to his sister's rescue. Burlesque was the only thing to save the situation, and a burlesque had to be written at once.

"Can you suggest a good Oriental subject?" asked Harris of Lennard after dinner at Portland Place one evening. Author and impresario hit on the idea of "Lalla Rookh," Kate Vaughan was to play Lalla, and Harris would lend Harry Nicholls for Fadladheen. Bucalossi, whose "My Queen" waltz was then the rage of London, was called in to do the music, and the whole thing was ready in a fortnight—a rare piece of hustle.

In the caste were Minnie and Dot Mario (then at their best), W. H. Denny, Susie Vaughan, and a score of the smartest girls from the Lane, including Alma Stanley, Phoebe Don, Challie Clayton, Elsie Ward, Emily Clare, Flo Lindsay and Theresa Hopworth. The result was a big success and the little theatre was packed every night. Thirteen hundred pounds were taken in the first week, which was not bad for a little bandbox like the Novelty.

In those days nothing came amiss to the staff of Corlett's paper. They were capable of writing plays, racing articles, comic paragraphs, and cookery books—and writing them well.

And Gus Harris himself was something of a driving force, and accustomed to cope with emergencies.

More than one old stager will remember his speech of apology from the stage when on the first night of the Drury Lane Autumn drama the wrong horse won in the big race scene. The curtain fell hurriedly, and the men in the stage-boxes who were familiar with the voice of the manager thought that they heard it consigning unknown persons to regions where Derbys are presumably unknown, and even the Ten Commandments are dead. The Gusarris, pale but smiling, appeared before the curtain. Said he blandly:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I regret that, carried away by your enthusiasm, you should for one moment imagine that a *contretemps* has occurred. Such is not the case. It being obviously impossible for us, even on this great stage, to show the whole of the Epsom Derby from start to finish, we have been compelled to place the winning-post some distance lower down here —(pointing O.P.)—and I give you my word of honour that the favourite not only got up rather cleverly in the last few strides, but beat the outsider on the post by the shortest of heads. With your good pleasure, the play will now proceed." (Loud cheering, and versions of "F'ree's a jolly good fe'ler!")

But not the least amusing part of it all was the absolute seriousness with which poor Stefano Gatti, who was in the front row of the stalls, took it. Discussing the incident at supper afterwards in the Adelaide Galleries, he said:

"De public is too ready to t'ink bad t'ings of da race-course. Sairtintly I t'ought myself dat da outsider had won, but Sir 'Arris is a man of honour, and when he say dat da favourita win by short head, dat is so; depend upon it, da favourita won alla right!"

It used always to be said that of the two Harrises, Sir Augustus and his brother Charles, the Stage Damager, that Gus was the idealist while Charlie was the realist. Whatever Gus may have been, Charles was a realist.

A lovely little lady playing a minor part pleaded as an excuse for her lateness at a rehearsal that she had that very morning become engaged.

"And—and he loves me so much, Mr. Harris," she confided, with nervous pride.

"How do you know?" grunted the Stage Damager.

For a moment she stared at him in surprise.

"How do I know?" she stammered. "Well—he—he writes me such beautiful verses."

"Poetry!" sneered Charles. "Poetry be hung! Poetry! If a man *really* loves a woman with a pure an' holy love which neither time can assuage nor eternity efface; with a love that sets his every nerve thrillin' when he sees the object of his infinite passion, he doesn't write *poetry* to her! No! He says, in accents which honest love alone can kindle: 'Come over to the Albion, cocky, and have a bit o' somethin' to eat!' Poetry!"

And it was the Stage Damager who on an immortal occasion attempted to console the great Bessie Bellwood herself.

It was one evening in the depth of winter, and the lady was distressed.

"Oh dear me! I don't know how I shall get home!" she wailed, and the whole *clientèle* of Romano's became attentive and sympathetic; "the bally roads are like plate glass, and my poor horse goes slipping about all over the place like a sick kitten on a hot brick."

"Look here, my dear," said Charles paternally, "you've only got to get into the blanky broom an' the blanky roads 'll melt, you're so blanky warm."

And as the Bellwood also had the gift of language, the argument straightaway ran high.

Which was all very pleasant, and homely, and nobody seemed to mind.

But once the alarming Stage Damager was silenced, absolutely silenced, by a mere chit of an "extra lady."

Though the salary of an "extra lady" of those days would now be deemed an insufficient wage by a federated engine-wiper's apprentice, the fact remains that some of them were quite marvellous managers. The "call" for rehearsal had been for an unusually early hour, and when the beautiful lady at last blew in,—a harmony of sables and scents,—a full half hour late, the Stage Damager minced neither matters nor words.

"Sorry," she drawled, cutting short the flow, "but my maid was late in calling me. The poor thing has to do treble duty now that I am without a butler and page."

For a full half-minute Charles Harris gaped like a goldfish. Then at last:

"My oath!" he managed to blurt, "you're not so bally *slow* if you are *late*!"

Which again was all considered to be very merry, cheery and homely.

One bright spring Sunday, a merry party had gone "a coach-back"—as Walter Dickson used to put it—to Stoke Park, and the following day some of the party were discussing the happy Sabbath they had spent.

"But where," asked someone who had not been present at the festivities, "where is Stoke Park?"

"Stoke Park?" echoed the Stage Damager, "Stoke Park? Here's a blank blank who don't know where the blank Stoke Park is! Why, it's where Grace's blank Eulogy was written!"

And it was the Stage Damager who made an immortal addition to the rules of Court etiquette during a rehearsal of a costume play. To the group of Louis Quinze nobles, in powder and patches, about to go on in the great ballroom scene, he gave this memorable advice:

"Now don't forget, ye blanky Maiden Lane pikers; waist-high for the handshake, mind! Waist-high for the hand-shake, blank ye!"

The school of production of Augustus Harris was a rough and ready one, but never was the theory of being "all right at night" so nearly upset as it was with George Edwardes' first and only pantomime. The rebuilding of the Grand Theatre, Croydon, had been just completed in time for the Christmas show, and it was not until November that Meyer Lutz and Lennard were commissioned to prepare a new version of "Cinderella." The book and music were done in a fortnight, and a fine company was engaged, including Grace Palotta as the Prince, and Maggie May as Cinderella. The stage, however, was not ready for rehearsals until a week before Christmas.

At the dress rehearsal there were no dresses, and the unreadiness was appalling. Nevertheless, everyone was assured that it would be "all right at night." Katti Lanner had arranged two ballets, but when the curtain went up, not a costume had turned up for the first of them. Bits of ribbons and flowers were pinned on to the children, and they were made presentable. The costumier's women were fixing up some of the characters, while they were waiting at the entrances for their cues.

The pantomime was produced on Christmas eve, and in the ordinary course there should have been Christmas Day free

before the next performance,—which was the Boxing Day matinee,—but when the author went down to the theatre early next morning it was in the hands of firemen and salvage people. There had been a fire in the night. It was thought that someone lighting a cigarette on leaving one of the boxes had thrown a lighted match on to the floor or curtain. The builders of the theatre had guaranteed it to be fireproof, and it was submitted to a speedy test. The coverings of the seats had been burnt, but not one inch of the walls or framework had suffered. Several rows of stalls and the front of the circle wanted recovering, but before the upholsterers could get to work the insurance people had to be communicated with. This naturally took some time on Christmas Day. But the Fairy Godmother who, in those days, looked after all good pantomimes, came to the rescue. All the scorched fabrics were removed, and everything was restored in time for the matinee.

"Why don't you find some job at the Opera Comique for that young nephew of yours?" asked John Hollingshead of Michael Gunn.

"Because he'd never be any use in a theatre: he only thinks about horses and dogs," was Gunn's reply.

"Give him a chance, at anyrate," said Practical John. "It's not good for a boy to be kicking his heels about the Strand doing nothing."

The young nephew was George Edwardes, then twenty-five years of age, with light curly hair and blue eyes. Edwardes was a bit of a philosopher, even in those days, and had already evolved his classification of all men into "positives" and "negatives," which remained one of his theories through life. Two "positives" or two "negatives," he persisted to the end, are bound to disagree; the ideal combination, he would assert, is that of a "positive" and a "negative." He, of course, counted himself a "positive."

As a boy he had been sent to Russia, where his elder brother, Julius, was a flourishing merchant. But he did not get on there, and returned to England to cram for the Army (in which his brother John was serving), but failed to pass. So it came about that when his uncle Michael Gunn, after thinking over Hollingshead's suggestion, offered to put the young nephew in charge of the box office at the Opera Comique, Edwardes promptly accepted.

That was the start on the road to fame and fortune of the man

who " would never be any use in a theatre." Before his death he had revolutionised the world of light entertainment, and had some 3,000 people on his weekly salary list.

" The Sorcerer " was the first piece produced at the Opera Comique. Then followed " H.M.S. Pinafore," and " The Pirates,"—both great successes,—and D'Oyly Carte, Gunn, Gilbert and Sullivan were making so much money that they resolved to build a theatre of their own, and acquired a site in the Savoy. Edwardes was promoted to " Acting Manager " at the new house.

During the first years at the Savoy, Edwardes had rooms on the second floor of the adjoining mansions, the ground floor of which was occupied by the Savage Club, and nearly every night after the theatre, a party would assemble in his sitting-room for a game of cards. One night the host and Lennard were so absolutely cleared out at *vingt-et-un* that, between them, they could not raise a cab-fare after the others had gone, and the guest slept on the sofa. In the light of the morning he spied on the table a crumpled fiver. With this in his hand, he dashed into Edwardes bedroom, and later, when the note was broken over a lunch, and he put the two pounds that remained to his share in his pocket, George confessed that at that moment he had not another penny in the world.

But Edwardes was always a man of ideas and enterprise.

Hearing that the cellars of the building in which he lived were unoccupied, he conceived the idea of converting them into the Savoy Turkish Baths. This, his first important speculation, proved a big success. He then embarked on a " penny in the slot " scheme, and proposed to place an automatic supply box selling cigarettes at a penny a piece in every smoking compartment of a train, but the Government officials insisted on a licence being taken out for each compartment, and that ended the scheme.

To those who had known him from his earliest days, Edwardes never changed, and though in his later incarnation as the successful and, perhaps, slightly spoilt theatrical impresario he naturally made enemies, he stuck to his early friends and they stuck to him. They had known him when he was desperately hard up, and when he was making thousands a week, and to them he never varied; he remained the big-hearted, ingenuous boy. He delighted in having old servants about him. When he went to the Gaiety, he appointed his childhood's

nurse as housekeeper, and her husband, Tierney, a weather-beaten sailor, was placed in charge of the stage door. At the time of his death there were many who had been in his service for twenty years, and some even longer.

It was in 1896 that he joined Hollingshead at the Gaiety, and they produced "Little Jack Sheppard" together—the only piece they did in partnership. Edwardes then acquired the sole interest in the theatre, and produced "Dorothy," which at first was not a success, and which, to his subsequent disgust, he passed on to H. J. Leslie at the Prince of Wales'. He later floated "The Gaiety Company Limited," with Walter Pallant —the "Palings" of the "Pink 'Un"—as chairman, most of the shares being subscribed on the Stock Exchange. Edwardes put himself down for a salary of £25 a week, with a bonus after five per cent. had been paid. Success followed success, and he began to take other theatres in hand, and for some time was managing director of the Empire.

He then took to racing, and his luck followed him; he himself admitted once: "I've had full value out of my racing."

It was Lennard who chose George Edwardes' racing colours and registered them at Weatherby's.

The turquoise Edwardes considered to be his lucky stone, and Lennard went to interview the colour-clerk on the subject of registering a turquoise jacket and cap, but it could not be done.

"Too like Lord Cadogan's Eton blue," pronounced the official.

Neither turquoise with white hoops nor turquoise with white stripes were available, and then it occurred to Lennard that the late Charlie White had a conspicuous jacket with black and white zig-zags on it.

"What do you call those things?" he asked the clerk.

"Chevrons," he said.

"Then can we have turquoise with white chevrons?"

"Yes."

When he got back to the Gaiety and told Edwardes what had been done, the manager looked up with a perplexed expression.

"What the devil are chevrons?" he wailed.

Months as a "prisoner of war" at Nauheim helped to kill him, and towards the end he gave up all hope for himself. Edwardes was a superstitious man, and always nervous about his health.

"I am sure I shall die on a Monday," he often declared, "it's my unlucky day."

The last time I heard him make that declaration he had just settled a very bad account at the Victoria Club, and his pessimism as to Monday had a blacker tinge than usual.

There was one curious venture of George Edwardes' which was—and is—known to few people.

After "Don Juan" was withdrawn at the Gaiety, Réjane had a summer season, and most of the Gaiety girls were "resting" in consequence. One night, in Edwardes' room, a series of religious living pictures was suggested, and the suggestion was immediately adopted. The idea was to attract the church and chapel folk, who would not in those days go to music-halls, with girls from the Gaiety and dresses from the Gaiety wardrobe, in familiar stories from the Bible told in "tableaux,"—such as "The Expulsion from the Garden of Eden," with Poppie Harris as Eve, "Rebecca in the Cornfield," "Joseph and his Brethren," and so forth, interspersed with representations of well-known pictures, such as "The Soul's Awakening," with Constance Collier as the soulful young lady, with the book, and "Rock of Ages," with Agatha Roze clinging to a big stone cross in the waves. Another favourite picture was "The Waters of Babylon," in which the Gaiety show girls were grouped under a palm-tree, while William Lugg, the actor (chosen on account of his venerable appearance), read extracts from the Bible, and the girls not actually occupied on the stage sang sacred choruses and anthems "off."

The production was really well done and was very successful, so much so, in fact, that Edwardes enthusiastically announced that they were not daring enough, and proposed to round off the series with a big picture of the Crucifixion—but there was a quiet hint from the Lord Chamberlain's office, and the scheme was abandoned.

And then it got about in religious circles that the fascinating Eve and the adorable Rebecca were "Gaiety girls," and, notwithstanding the attraction of the "beautiful women," the religious part of the community began to stay away.

One of Edwardes' entourage followed the Guv'nor's example, and dabbled in racing, but "Mikestein" knew more of the Stock Exchange and the theatre than of the Turf, in spite of the fact that at one time he owned a few horses, including a selling plater "Hetty H." named after a popular Gaiety girl,

and Welcome Lord, for which he gave 530 guineas, after he had won a selling race at Kempton, and in connection with that deal there is a story to tell.

George Edwardes, who then raced under the name of "Mr. Widdup," owned the runner-up, Charisia, who was beaten a head, receiving the 3 lbs. weight allowance for sex. In the evening, Edwardes and the new owner met at the Gaiety, and when the race was mentioned, Mike began to glorify his purchase.

"I ought to have won," said Edwardes, "and if you'll give me five pounds, I'll run mine against yours for a monkey.

The mind of the financier knew only of pounds sterling, and in a twinkling he whisked out a crisp fiver to clinch the bet. George roared, and it took ten minutes to explain to the new owner the value of pounds avoirdupois in racing.

At times Edwardes could be a bit of a diplomat—and diplomacy is essential in the successful handling of such touchy, kittle cattle as theatrical folk.

He was superintending one of the first rehearsals of a Gaiety piece, and the orchestra played the accompaniment of an air extremely badly. Edwardes did not want to hurt the feelings of the conductor by telling him that it must be repeated. A happy thought came to him.

"Dear old boy," he cooed, "let me take it that you have secured an encore for that number!"

A smart young fellow once called on George Edwardes with an introduction.

"I am sorry," said Gaiety George, "I have no vacancy on my business staff at present, and my salary lists are already very heavy."

"Salary is not so much the consideration as experience," urged the aspirant; "I want something to do. Give me a start and you needn't pay me anything at all."

"Well," mused Edwardes, "there is one place I might put you into—just on trial, to see if you can be useful."

"Oh! you'll find me useful, I promise you, but—would you mind telling me—shall I have the handling of any money?"

The smart young man remained unemployed.

Edwardes was approached one day at Daly's by another young gentleman who had the singular felicity to be married to one of the most charming little ladies in the cast, and, entertaining a natural desire to be near her, he had applied for a part.

Moreover, he had, whilst a prominent member of the something or other Amateur Strollers won much applause for his Petruchio, his Joseph Surface—Romeo—Captain Swift, etcetera.

"Yes, yes, yes," groaned Gaiety George, "but that isn't good enough for one of my musical comedies. Still, for the little woman's sake, you can walk on in the second act as a Cingalese lawyer; that ought to satisfy you!"

In the days when Lionel Monckton was doing much work at the Gaiety, the head scene-shifter, who had music in his soul, had a habit of listening attentively whenever the composer tried over a new song to be "dropped in" to the piece, and, before the musician was well off the stage, of sitting down to the piano and strumming his version of the air.

This annoyed Monckton, and one day he confided his annoyance to Edwardes.

"My dear Lionel," groaned George after much thought, "all I can advise you to do is, in revenge, to shift one of his scenes."

Success in the arts is often enough due to the unexpected and inconsequential, and bad weather in the Channel was once directly responsible for the birth of a popular Gaiety song.

One wintry night, Lionel Monckton was returning from Paris, and, on reaching Boulogne, he found that the boat service was suspended, owing to the gale which was ploughing up the Channel. There was nothing for it but to remain till morning, so he drove across the quai to the Hotel de Paris. In one corner of the *salle à manger* stood an old rattletrap piano, and his second nature drew Monckton to it. Like the gentleman who found himself "weary and ill at ease" at the organ, his "fingers wandered idly over the noisy keys," until he happened upon a few chords the lilt and melody of which were self-assertive.

"That's rather pretty, Lionel; what is it?" asked his friend.

"Well, it's nothing yet, but perhaps it might be something," Monckton replied, and jotted down the passage on the back of an envelope.

Next day, back in London, he elaborated the little theme, and in due course "The Soldiers in the Park" brought in something like two thousand sovereigns.

There was in a pre-war musical comedy a very beautiful but very commanding lady, who, in moments of annoyance, was apt to be overbearing. Edwardes watched her scene, and beckoned his youthful assistant.

"Go to Miss Blank," he said, "and tell her to cut out that preliminary business in her scene. And remember," he added hastily, as a previous difference of opinion came to his mind, "that you offer it as a suggestion coming from you—not from me."

The assistant departed cheerily and reached the stage.

"Oh, Miss Blank," he began gaily, "I wish—"

"Hey?" She turned upon him savagely, scenting his errand.

"If you could give me a minute," he faltered, "I'd like—"

"Look here!" she cried, advancing towards him, "if you've anything to tell me—we'll have it out here—now! What do you want to say?"

The youth wilted under her gaze.

"Would—would you like a new carpet in your dressing-room?" he asked faintly.

The Gaiety standard was exacting even in the old days.

On one occasion, Meyer Lutz, the then conductor, was trying voices for the chorus. One fair aspirant did her best, but her luck was out.

"She is no goot," was the old man's verdict, "she squints mit her knees."

A pretty lady once asked Gaiety George to describe to her the difference between comedy and tragedy.

"Comedy, my dear," he replied oracularly, "generally ends in a scene in a church; tragedy ends in the churchyard."

But description is a fine art, and perhaps one of the finest exhibitions of it was that given by Dick Marsh, the Royal trainer, when a great lady, hearing that he had been kicked by a two-year-old while it was being saddled in the Birdcage at Newmarket, made kind enquiries.

"And where were you kicked, Marsh?" she enquired sympathetically.

"On the soft part of the body, low down in the back, ma'am," was the diplomatic and courtier-like reply.

Edwardes at the first night of an opposition "show" which threatened to emerge a success was a joy to behold.

As the performance went better and better, and as the unmistakable signs of "making good" became apparent, he would fidget in his stall, act mock dismay at the hopeless badness of it all, and voice high-pitched, anguished protests at the sheer futility of the performance to his invariable satellites. His

anguish at the triumph of "The Belle of New York" was genuinely funny, and brought an indignant protest from the gallery, whom his antics disturbed.

But he had reason to be sore at the success of the "Belle," for it was a direct reflection on his judgment. He had refused it with scorn, and to the end persisted in decrying it as vulgar rubbish. The grapes were very, very sour in that instance. And the "Belle" *was* a success. Probably there had never been a more remarkable instance of the classic "leap to fame" than the sudden triumph of the pretty Edna May, who stepped on the stage one evening unknown, and left it famous, with all London in a few days humming her Salvation song. Many versions have been told of the beautiful Edna's first appearance on any stage.

Here is the true story of the finding of Edna May, by one who was present.

"It was at the first rehearsal of a piece called 'The Charity Girl,'" said the narrator, "when a chorister, who had brought with her a demure little companion, in a home-washed white blouse and a simple sailor hat, asked permission for her friend to sit on the bench at the back—just as one girl waits at the dentist's while her class-mate gets a tooth pulled. To engage her attention I handed her a spare prompt-book. A few weeks later, Edna May was 'The Belle of New York'!"

There were few prominent men on the Turf of his day whom Lennard had not met and known, and he was a mine of reminiscence on the racing characters of his era. As I write, many of these reminiscences rise to mind, and I select one, of a notorious and somewhat disreputable character who created something of a sensation in his day, which my old colleague was fond of relating.

Years ago there was racing in France a notorious racecourse character and gambler who was known to the racing world as "Flash Fred." Some offence committed at Goodwood led to his skipping over the Channel, but in France he did not come into conflict with the law, and was, to all appearances, a respectable "gentleman backer." He was invariably well-dressed, and the story that he had at least two thousand suits of clothes in his apartments was no great exaggeration. He was known as M. de Vallère—a French corruption of Wheeler.

On the occasion of his first visit to Caen races, Lennard had not taken the precaution to retain a room at the hotel, and had

difficulty in finding accommodation. Every place was packed, but at last he was promised a " shakedown " at the Angleterre for a sovereign a night, and the " shakedown " resolved itself into a mattress placed with others in a corridor leading to a little room, on the door of which was the mystic symbol " 00." Lennard inspected his accommodation—and turned out again, going to one of the cafés, which during race week remained open all night.

Cards and dominoes were being played and at one of the tables was a crowd watching two men playing *écarté*. The players were Fred de Vallère and a Frenchman, and, to pass the time, Lennard joined the crowd of onlookers and punted until about three in the morning. When the run of luck came against the Frenchman, he threw up his cards and rose to go. " Flash Fred " followed suit, and, turning to his compatriot, said :

" If you're staying at the Angleterre I can give you a lift ; my carriage is waiting for me outside."

On the way, the vision of his bedroom rose before Lennard, and he made a few unkind remarks about the hotel accommodation of Caen.

" I've got a double-bedded room," said Wheeler, " you can have one of the beds."

Lennard was about to decline, but " Flash Fred " anticipated him.

" Oh, you needn't be afraid," he said sardonically ; " I know I've got a bad name, but I shan't rob you, or murder you in your sleep ! "

The sight of the corridor—and the door at the end of it—decided Lennard, and he accepted the offer of a night's rest. Wheeler had the best bedroom in the hotel, and on the dressing table were laid out all the travelling requisites of a man of wealth and taste.

" Don't bother to send for your bag," he said, throwing his guest a suit of silk pyjamas.

Some weeks later, Lennard found himself at Trouville for the Deauville fortnight. Entering the baccarat room at the Casino, he found several tables in play, and after a little time he had run a couple of *louis* into some fifteen or twenty. He went to the cashier's desk to change his *jetons*, and there ran against " Flash Fred."

" Pardon me," whispered the gambler, " but would you mind lending me a fiver ? I'm broke."

Lennard handed him a hundred franc note. He went straight to a table and tossed it on the nearest *tableau;* the banker "struck," and the note was swept in by the croupier. He was back in a moment.

"Just one more!" he pleaded. "I must get a start."

Lennard handed him another hundred franc note and the process was repeated. Luck was against him. Again he returned for "just one more."

"No, my dear chap, I can't," protested Lennard, "I haven't got it to spare."

"But I saw you change fifteen *louis* just now."

"Yes, I know, and I mean to leave the room a winner. It's one of my rules always to take away a bit of their money if it comes my way."

"But I'll pay you back at the races to-morrow, I swear. It's awful to be in the room without tossing a coin."

"You've got a coin on your watch-chain," said Lennard, pointing to a gold Monaco coin.

"I can't part with that: it has associations."

"You needn't part with it: the *caissier* will lend you a hundred francs on it and keep it till you redeem it."

"I wouldn't for the world let 'em know I'm so hard up!"

"I've no qualms!" laughed Lennard. "Take the coin off your watch-chain and I'll arrange it for you."

He obeyed. Lennard took the gold coin to the desk, explained what he wanted, and returned to "Flash Fred" with the hundred francs, after which, to avoid the possibility of a renewed attempt at "tapping," he left the room.

Later in the evening, meeting a man who wished to be introduced to the Cercle Privé, he took him upstairs, and, as they entered the room, he heard a familiar voice bidding for the bank.

"Sixty, eighty—one hundred *louis*! It is yours, monsieur!" And "Flash Fred" moved towards the banker's seat. As he passed, Lennard touched him on the arm.

"Hullo!" said Wheeler. "Your two hundred francs? I've turned it into two hundred *louis*. There's a hundred for the bank and a hundred for the *refait*; you're in five per cent."

There was no time to remonstrate or argue; he was dealing the cards at once. He had a short run of luck, then lost on both sides, threw in the cards, gathered the remains of the bank into

Photograph : Crailey, Cardiff

FRED TERRY

a bowl and beckoned Lennard over to him. On a side-table he counted his winnings.

"There's my two hundred," he said, "and there's the profit—one hundred, two hundred, two hundred and sixty. Five per cent, thirteen pounds—there you are. The original two hundred francs I'm going to keep, it has brought me luck. You're in everything I do to-night."

Another bank was for sale at one of the smaller tables. He bought it for fifty *louis*.

"You're in ten per cent. this time."

As Lennard could not be a loser now, Wheeler's doings had ceased to interest him. He left the Casino and went for a stroll along the front, but, just before returning to his hotel, some impulse of curiosity led him back to the gambling room.

Wheeler was holding a bank with a heap of thousand franc *jetons* in front of him. He looked up, and caught sight of Lennard.

"You're in this," he nodded.

The play became high, and "Flash Fred" could not do wrong. All the nines seemed to fall his way, and when he passed the bank, most of the punters were broke.

"I'm glad you came back," he said, joining Lennard. "I want some supper. If you hadn't come I should have gone on playing all night, and the luck couldn't have lasted. Now, let's see how we stand."

He had won £7,000, out of which he handed Lennard ten per cent., but refused to return the lucky two hundred francs.

In the grey of the morning, a party crossed the harbour in the ferry boat on the way to Deauville racecourse to see the horses do their morning work. In mid-stream the ferry was stopped by some fishermen who were dragging to the surface the body of a dead man. "Flash Fred" took from his pocket a great handful of notes, and, leaning over, rubbed them on the corpse.

"There's nothing like the touch of a dead man to bring you luck," he said.

On the outbreak of war, Lennard, with typical energy, tackled the real reason which prevented so many men enlisting in the voluntary days, and which depressed the energies of so many plucky fellows who had enlisted. He was fond of instancing a particular case. An "unfit" clerk, who had been earning from three to four pounds a week, applied for Army work, was

engaged as packing clerk in the A.S.C. and sent at once to the front. His pay was three and sixpence a day, and his wife received a twelve and sixpence a week separation allowance,—a sum utterly insufficient to keep the decent little home the two had got together. To Lennard's disgust, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Association would have nothing to do with the case, and, realising that there must be thousands like it, he evolved a scheme which was not a charity.

The original idea was simply that four of the "stay-at-homes" should each contribute five shillings a week to increase the separation allowance to the wife or dependents of one of their friends, colleagues or neighbours who had gone to the war. In the Malden and Coombe district, where Lennard then lived, and where the "Form Fours" scheme was first put in force, with the assistance of the leading local doctors, the Clerk of the Council and the bank-manager, all cases were discreetly investigated, and every Saturday the wife was enabled to call at the bank and draw the amount of her rent as though she had an account. There was no element of charity, of patronage, or of obligation. It was, Lennard held, the performance, by those who stayed at home, of a duty to those who had gone.

From tiny beginnings, the scheme spread rapidly, and hundreds of good fellows in every branch of life, from the Houses of Parliament to Tattersall's Ring, helped to push the idea. Like all such schemes, at first it hung fire for a few weeks, but Lennard's energy was indomitable and the encouragement from the few sustained him. In the darkest hour—poor Lennard, like all enthusiasts, had his moments of black depression—it was an old friend in that fine actor and good fellow, Fred Terry, who brought the necessary fillip of encouragement. It was not only the financial aid, but the enthusiastic sympathy that Lennard needed, and both Fred Terry gave him.

"Had it not been for Fred Terry," "Rooty" often told me, "I might have dropped the whole thing in despair."

And such was the curious war psychology at the time that, at that very moment, the actor, who was indefatigable in help and encouragement, was being bitterly assailed by a group of narrow-minded bigots, and styled pro-German—because he had the courage to bring forward the hard case of British subjects born in this country of German parents who had settled here in Victorian days.

"Do you know," wrote Fred Terry, "I believe there are asses

in this world who think I'm a little inclined to pro-Germanism! God forgive them. I believe there's no good German but a dead one, but I want justice to those whose misfortune it is to have parents who were born in Germany."

But it was a mad world in those early days of war.

The "Form Fours" scheme prospered to such an extent that many regular subscribers had to be asked to reduce their subscriptions, as all needs had been provided for, and it is pleasant to think that some hundreds of saved homes—homes saved in a fine-spirited, tactful, practical manner—stand to-day as a monument to my old colleague and his work in the war.

XVII

ROUND THE TOWN

The Aquarium—Labouchere—The " Butter-dish ": Assault—Fatty Coleman—A Fistic Encounter—The Beefsteak Affair—The G.O.M.—Labby and Dizzy—Lord Randolph Churchill—Sir W. S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan—Giving " Iolanthe " Away—Labby's Practical Jokes—Campbell Bannerman and the Duellists—The Empire—Harry Hitchins—The Promenade—The Club Spirit—County Council Regulations—Madame Katti Lanner—Madame Nicol—The Alhambra—Lady Meux—The Apotheosis of Valerie Rhys—Lord Marcus Beresford—Volodyovski—George Scott—A Great Showman's Resource—" Behind the Scenes "—The Anguished Ballerina—Music-hall Rivalry—The Zancigs—Philippe of the Cavour—A Good Tip—The Humorous Giant—The Palace—Herman Finck—The Music Pirate—Gaby Deslys and the Enthusiast—George Bull—The Lauder Devotees—" Commands "—The Cause of the War—Jimmy Glover—A Sandringham " Command "—The " George and Mary " Souvenir—An Astute Move—The Overwrought Stage-hand.

IN the late 'seventies and early 'eighties, the Royal Aquarium was one of the night resorts of London.

In 1873 Frank Buckland and Harry Lee started the now derelict Brighton Aquarium and its success (it took less to amuse folk forty or fifty years ago) suggested the idea of a London Aquarium to Wybrow Robertson. About eighteen months later he got hold of a large plot of land in the slums of Westminster, formed a company, and sold the land to them at a profit. On the board of directors were Whiteley, of Westbourne Grove, Arthur Sullivan the composer, Henry Labouchere, Bassano the photographer, and other well-known men—what old Sir John Astley would have called a " curious conglomeration of mixed spirits." Captain Molesworth was the chairman.

Before long a row royal between Labouchere and Robertson occurred, and added much to the gaiety of the town. The rights and wrongs were complicated, but it was generally believed that a pair of women were at the bottom of it.

Marie Litton and Henrietta Hodson were rival actresses, and Miss Litton was Mrs. Wybrow Robertson, while Miss Hodson became Mrs. Labouchere.

It was at Boulogne that the Labouchere-Robertson dispute culminated in the famous " butter-dish " assault. The annual fair was in possession of the ramparts; and " everyone " went over for the Boulogne fair. Labby was there with " the beautiful Mrs Rousby," the actress, Alexander Henderson the theatrical manager, Miss Hodson, and other friends. Here is Labby's version:

" I happened to turn round and I saw Robertson, accompanied by a lady, staring at us. I pointed him out to Mrs Rousby. I was carrying a glass butter-dish which she had won in a tombola at one of the booths. ' If your hands were empty I would knock you down ! ' he said. But not particularly caring for a row in the fair at Boulogne, I made no reply. ' I will insult you whenever I meet you ! ' he continued. ' I shall be obliged to call a *sergent de ville* to you, my good man, if you disgrace yourself in this way,' I gently observed, and resumed my conversation with Mrs Rousby. I'm averse to figuring in a street row, more particularly abroad, where even the lowest of the population regard such exhibitions as discreditable. But there is a limit to gentle endurance. The butter-bowl, the precious trophy of persistent enterprise, had to be sacrificed. I divested myself of it by hurling it at Robertson's head. In the meanwhile, the lady who was with Robertson (Miss Litton) hung upon his arm and held him back.' "

Finally, Labby was left master of the field—but minus his lady-friend's butter-dish.

The Royal Aquarium passed through many strange vicissitudes before it finally closed. It was not the entertainment on the stage that was the attraction—nor the fishes. Many prize-fights took place there, the Boxing Kangaroo was a great draw in its time—and it was at the Aquarium that Eugene Sandow leapt into fame during a " strong man " boom by challenging Samson from the audience and defeating him.

When Wybrow Robertson retired from the Aquarium that quaint character Fatty Coleman was appointed manager. Coleman was—well, fatty. His girth was enormous, and Downs, Jimmy Davis's butler, used to complain that he impeded the waiting.

" I could lay supper for twelve on his back ! " he snorted to his master.

His appetite was proportionate to his size. Nothing in the

way of food—or drink—came amiss to Fatty, and the greater the delicacy, the greater his appreciation. One early spring, on Jimmy Davis's table in Curzon Street was a moss nest which had been carefully arranged with a " sitting " of salt and pepper casters shaped and coloured like plover's eggs. These were placed just outside the gourmet's reach, and his furtive manœuvres to bring the nest up to his plate and crack an egg were watched with interest by the whole dinner party.

Fatty, it was rumoured, had originally been a barrister's clerk, serving in that capacity with Bovill, K.C. Then he became a cigar and tobacco merchant, and later, thanks to " Angus," Duke of Hamilton, he got an appointment at the Arlington Club. Later still, he became connected with the Lotus, the Pelican and the Barn Clubs, and later still, he accompanied Teddy Bayly to Folkestone. The National Sporting Club was very good to him at the end, and truth to tell, his former friends had rather wearied of him.

" A quid all round," once begged Swears on Fatty's behalf, " that'll give him somewhere to sit down. That's what he wants—somewhere to sit down. It's awful, positively awful, dear old things, to see him dragging from bar to bar without a great-coat this weather ! "

Jimmy Davis tossed over his sovereign.

" Seeing that he can sit on a chair in the park all day for a penny, he ought to be able to sit for the next half-dozen years now—if sitting is all he wants," he jerked sardonically.

In his declining years Fatty was never too proud to accept a sovereign from any old friend, and there were certain times of the year at which, as he put it, he went about London collecting his rents. He knew the exact sum he was likely to obtain from all his acquaintances during the year. There were some rich men who gave him a £10 note, and the scale dropped down to quite a number of £1 men. At times Fatty made strenuous attempts to " promote " the one-pounders to the £2 list, but as a rule they as strenuously resisted.

One appeal Fatty made which never, or hardly ever, failed, and that was a statement that it was his wife's birthday, and he had not enough money in his pocket to take her home a bunch of flowers in honour of the occasion. Sometimes it occurred to the men to whom he told this story that his wife's birthday came round about once a quarter, but the tremble in Fatty's

voice was so wonderful, and the tear in his eye so unmistakeable, that no one was cruel enough to ask any questions.

To Fatty Coleman is due whatever credit attaches to the feat of making the position of highly unofficial referee at a fistic encounter a profitable undertaking.

The few who are living of the initiated may remember a midnight scrap in St. James's Park between the late Bailie Guthrie and Edward Neale over—no matter what, the reason was a good and sufficient one for four properly recorded rounds under the shadow of the walls of Marlborough House, and (the police " moving 'em on ") for nine more rounds in front of the interested sentries at Buckingham Palace.

Two gamer opponents never fought with the naked fists, and there was sufficient of bad blood to give energy to the affair, but, in the absence of ropes and stakes, the fight was all-over-the-shop, and in the thirteenth round, Neale tripped over the kerbstone and badly sprained his ankle, the joint swelling instantly to such an extent that to continue the fight was impossible.

" Come along ! Fight on ! " roared " Stiffy " Smith, Neale's second, not realising what had happened.

" How the devil can I? My ankle's gone ! " snapped Neale.

" That's nothing ! You're not allowed to *kick* him ! " persisted " Stiffy," but other counsels prevailed, and a draw was ordered.

Some forty minutes previously, as principals, seconds and partisans came angrily down the Duke of York's steps, Guthrie, in pulling off his white dress-waistcoat, strewed the ground with twenty or thirty sovereigns.

" Never mind—don't stop—*I'll* look after 'em ! " cried Fatty Coleman, who was naturally in the rear, and the assent which Guthrie's unconsidered silence gave to the proffered protectorate was interpreted by Fatty as extending from that memorable night to the day on which he closed his eyes forever in a small hotel hard by Covent Garden.

But any reminiscences of Stephen Coleman would be hideously incomplete without the story of his masterly disposal of the highly over-wined and lobstered gentleman at a Covent Garden ball, who, in the early hours of Saturday morning, after many personal remarks on Fatty's appearance, evinced a desire to fight.

"Not here," said Fatty imperturbably, "but anywhere you like when you're sober. Give me your name and address!"

"——!" replied the offender, using an utterly unprintable monosyllable.

"Thanks," said Fatty, writing on his shirt-cuff. "Thanks; *and* the address?"

Another abortive duel of the irresponsible days, in which Labouchere and a member of the "Pink 'Un" staff—Pot Stephens—figured, became known as the "Beefsteak affair."

When Labouchere started *Truth* he took delight in sneering at the *Daily Telegraph*, and in abusing the proprietor, whom he insisted on calling "Levi." The attacks grew so outrageously abusive—for once in his life, Labby lost all sense of decency—that one night Mr Lawson followed the slanderer of his family into the Beefsteak Club and struck him over the head with "his grandfather's stick." There was, of course, a row royal; Labouchere went back into the Club, and after consulting his friends, insisted on challenging his aggressor to a duel. Stephens was chosen to carry the challenge, but the feud died down and all ended peacefully.

Two editors and proprietors as wide apart as the poles in pretty nearly every personal characteristic were Corlett and Labouchere, yet each had a sincere regard for the other.

Corlett was a devotee of the open air, in his earlier days, at least, a lover of exercise, a non-smoker, a mighty trencherman and a lover of good wine; Labouchere's boast was that all the exercise he took was in cabs, he was an inveterate cigarette-smoker, ate little, drank nothing; like Corlett in one respect, he wrote an abominable hand, and lived to be eighty. Two things they had in common: an enormous capacity for work, and a sense of humour.

Old John once asked him why, in a case in which *Truth* was concerned, Wildey Wright, who was something of a Boanerges, was briefed for the printers, and Labby smiled.

"Well, you see, now and then I want to think a little, and Wildey gives me the chance. He comes booming in like a heavy tragedian, rolling his 'r's,' with: 'Sir Robert, I venture to suggest, with all due respect to me learned friend, the Attorney-General, that the question he desires to put is one that has been held by the highest authority, Coke, C.J.—whom I will now proceed to read,'—and so forth and so on. And by that time," said Labby, "I am ready again."

When in the mood, Labouchere was full of Parliamentary stories, and made no bones of telling tales against himself.

That he was the author of "The Grand Old Man" admits of no doubt, and Corlett had the story from his own lips.

It was after Bradlaugh had been sent back, and Labouchere went down to Northampton to support him. It was doubtful, to say the least of it, whether Mr Gladstone loved Labby, but Labby made it appear that he did. Said he:

"Before I left the House that grand old man came to me, and, taking both my hands in his"—here the speaker acted the scene inimitably—"with tears in his eyes, said: 'Mr Labouchere, bring me Mr Bradlaugh back again!'"

Another story Master had from him was of the knock-down blow Disraeli gave him over the Suez Canal.

Labby, a keen financier, had seen that the state of Egypt was thoroughly rotten, and week after week in the money articles in the *World*, and later in his own paper, *Truth*, he exposed the weakness of the stock, and as at the same time he was selling heavily on his own account, Egyptians were reduced indeed, and one night he went to bed with his book showing a profit of nearly half-a-million. He woke up next morning to find it gone —and more beside.

"I never get up early," he told Corlett, "and always read *The Times* in bed. On opening it, I saw Dizzy had bought the Suez Canal. It was the right thing for him to do, but who on earth would have thought of his doing it? I knew my book was ruined. Some men, I suppose, would have rushed off to the City, but I knew it was no use. So I stopped a little longer in bed."

But ever afterwards he had a profound admiration for Beaconsfield.

A Parliamentary story he used to tell came from the tea-room, where he was in conversation with Mr Peter Rylands. Lord Randolph Churchill passed through, and seeing Rylands came up to him.

"What an ass you were, Rylands," he said vehemently, "to say in the House what you did just now!"

Rylands, offended, drew himself up.

"If you wish to know my authority," he said coldly, "I will tell you. It was a speech made by Lord Randolph Churchill at Blackburn!"

"Yes," answered Lord Randolph, "but when I said that

I'd taken devilish good notice that there was no one who could contradict me. You, like a damned fool, said it in the presence of the very man who could ! "

One of Labouchere's most marked features was his keen insight into character, combined with an equally keen sense of humour. Remonstrated with, as he often was, by a friend of his who disputed some of his views :

" You know you don't *really* believe that, Labby," Labby replied calmly :

" My dear fellow, there is one thing in the world that I do most firmly believe in—and that is the unlimited stupidity and cupidity of the masses."

Labouchere never shirked a quarrel, and two of the people with whom he disagreed most violently were the then Mr Lawson of the *Daily Telegraph* and W. S. Gilbert. His quarrel with the proprietor of the *Telegraph* led to them both being asked to resign from the Beefsteak Club, but Labby flatly declined to do so, saying emphatically that the committee had no right to make such a request, and he continued a member of the Club, though he never entered its doors. His quarrel with Gilbert was over theatrical matters, and connected with some dispute over the appearance of Miss Henrietta Hodson—Mrs Labouchere—in " Pygmalion and Galatea." The quarrel was a bitter one—as quarrels mostly are in which a woman is concerned—and Gilbert firmly believed some years later that he was requested to move on from an hotel on the Italian Lakes because Labouchere was staying there.

And Gilbert himself was by no means of an easy disposition.

I once heard Rutland Barrington describe with some feeling the difference in the methods of Gilbert and Sullivan at rehearsal.

In his way, each was a martinet, but the ways were very different.

" Count seven as you walk towards the centre of the stage, and then commence to speak your words," was one of Gilbert's commands to Barrington, who by the time he had counted seven had completely forgotten his words, and great was the wrath of Gilbert, and unmeasured his language. As a contrast Barrington cited Sullivan.

" Charming, most charming, Mr Barrington ! But—it was not my music you were singing ; if you don't mind, we will try it over again—my music, *if* you please," said Sullivan.

Which, in the singer's words, had not the effect of taking the appetite away, and was not intended to have.

When my confrere on the old " Pink 'Un " and *Town Topics*, Horace Lennard, was sending contributions to the *World* of Edmund Yates' day, he incurred Gilbert's severe displeasure by disclosing the plot of " Iolanthe " before its production.

The information was obtained in a perfectly innocent and legitimate way, but Gilbert was furious, had the entire Savoy company summoned on the stage, and gave them " a piece of his mind," under the impression that some one of them must have given the secret away.

The piece was originally to have had another name, in order to keep up the " P " series begun by " Pinafore," " Pirates," and " Patience," but he changed it at the last moment to " Iolanthe," in order to let Yates see that the *World* did not know everything.

Labby had a curious love for practical jokes, and not the least amusing—to his mind—was one he played on an occasion when a well-known British judge and other people of high position were playing cards in his room at Carlsbad. He had mentioned casually at dinner that gambling, even in private rooms, was illegal at the Austrian watering-place, and only remarked " I told you so ! " when an officer of the police and his attendants walked in and took the names of all the party, announcing that they would come forthwith before a magistrate for an offence against the law. It was only when the very distinguished people were about to march in custody through the streets with very wry faces that Labby explained that the police official was in reality the head-waiter, and his satellites were his under-waiters.

Labouchere was a personal friend of King Edward, who, after a temporary coolness, using Sir George Lewis as his intermediary, let him know that nothing that appeared in *Truth* would affect his private feeling of regard for him.

His official biographer, his nephew, Algar Thorold, told me at Montreux a typical story of the grim old gentleman.

At Labby's wish, Thorold was collecting material for the biography, during his uncle's lifetime, and periodically used to go to Florence from Montreux, where he was staying, in response to some message, and receive a further batch of data for the book. The old man was then very ill, and on one of these visits, in the temporary absence of the nurse, the nephew

sat in the sick-room. By some chance, a spirit-lamp was upset and for a moment blue flames shot up. Hurriedly the nephew was extinguishing the blaze, and looked anxiously at the invalid, who throughout lay immobile, with closed eyes. At last the eyes opened, and the lips moved into a smile as he saw the flames.

"Not yet!—Not yet!" Labouchere murmured cynically.

No more generous man than Labouchere ever breathed, but he took it as a personal insult that he should be thought so. To men asking for assistance he would use words that stung until they felt inclined to kick him. When they reached home, more often than not they would find, not the money they had asked for, but much more, and probably sent to the man's wife, if he had one. And—I have never seen it in print, but it is nevertheless a fact—it was Labouchere who provided for Piggott's dependants after the memorable suicide in a foreign hotel.

Throughout his life Labouchere went his own way, doing what seemed good and right to him with an utter disregard for the consequences, social or political, and his attitude was once fairly summed up in the lines:

> "Who 'dines' the Prince—so people say;
> And in the H. of C. next day
> Moves a reduction of his pay?
> Our Labby!"

Boulogne was the scene of another little "affair" on the lines of the Labouchere fracas, which almost, but not quite, ended in a serious encounter.

A Prime Minister's duties and obligations are many and various, and, from all accounts, are greater every year, but it is a safe bet that neither the present nor any future Premier need contemplate the possibility of being second in a duel.

Yet Campbell-Bannerman, of all people, very nearly found himself in this position while Minister of War, and a member of the "Pink 'Un" staff was another possible second.

The "Pink 'Un" member was staying at Boulogne, where also were C.B. and Dr Tanner, a tear-away, devil-may-care Irish M.P., as mad as a hatter. One hot night, when all were in the Casino, Tanner insisted on the window being opened. A Frenchman—an officer—with your true Frenchman's hatred of

fresh air, objected, and every time Tanner opened it the Frenchman shut it. The peppery little politician said something about a German being wanted to make the French keep their windows open, and the Frenchman promptly fired up. The upshot of it all was that he sent a challenge to Tanner, who asked the "Pink 'Un" to be one of his seconds. The latter accepted, more for the fun of the thing than as a serious business, but he stared open-mouthed when the irascible Doctor, who took the whole business with the utmost seriousness, insisted on his going to C.B. and asking him to be the other second. Tanner was an M.P. and vowed that it was a Cabinet Minister's duty to support him.

C.B. took the affair as a huge joke; but sent for Tanner, and, in the presence of his fellow second, gave him a long lecture on his duty and responsibility as a member of the British House of Commons. Then he went on to point out the risk he ran; vowed that the opponent was a professional duellist; advised him to make his will and leave all his affairs in order, and after doing his best to frighten the wits out of the Irishman, sent him away, promising to act as one of his seconds.

Tanner agreed to leave everything in C.B.'s hands, so the two seconds went off and met the Frenchman's seconds, and the manner in which the future Prime Minister handled them stamped him as a diplomat of high rank. His spoof was magnificent. He peremptorily insisted on pistols as the weapons, and lauded Tanner as a devil of a shot, who invariably killed his man.

In the end, both principals were in a deadly funk; neither wished to fight, each withdrew his words, and a dinner of peace was fixed up at one of the hotels.

There is a journalist walking about London whose boast it is that he "killed the Empire promenade." The "killing," of course, was a "stunt," and it was not he who "killed" it—but let that pass. "Stunt" journalism must be served.

Up to the end, say, of Hitchins' days as manager, the Empire was club as well as music-hall. Men went there not so much for the entertainment as for companionship, and the companionship—be it noted—of other men. To the habitué, the feminine lure of the promenade made small appeal. Twenty years ago it was said that there were three places in the world in which one was bound to meet the returned wanderer from the waste places if one waited long enough—the Salon Carré of the

Louvre, Charing Cross Station, and the Empire Promenade. When one said good-bye to a friend on his way to India, China, Singapore, or the backblocks of Empire, nine hundred and ninety times out of one thousand his last words were: "So long, old man, see you in London again. Sure to run across you in the Empire."

So, in one sense, the music-hall in Leicester Square was not ill-named: it was a gathering and meeting place for the men of the Empire.

During the years immediately preceding the war the club tone had dwindled, and probably the first signs of a break from the old tradition came when prudes on the prowl agitated for the closing of the bar in the promenade. One restriction followed another, and after the death of Harry Hitchins many of the old associations were broken up. Before the days of the big salon at the back of the stalls on the ground floor, there was a foyer on the O.P. side of the circle which was like a club-room—a tape-machine clicked off all the news of the evening, and on the eve of a big race much business was transacted there. And the liquor sold was of the best in London. That was one of the "features" of the Empire. One was sure of pure, wholesome whisky, and the old brandy was the real old brandy, while the cigars, which were bought through Mr Alfred de Rothschild, were of the highest quality. I remember one could get a "Bock Cabinet" at the Empire for a shilling which even in the economical pre-war days would cost eighteenpence elsewhere. What it would cost nowadays goodness only knows.

In 1894 the L.C.C. insisted on the foyer at the back of the circle being closed, and the regular habitués protested in forcible manner. There was a small riot, and the barriers were torn down by a group of young fellows about town—at the head of whom was a young fellow about town named Winston Churchill—who marched in procession round Leicester Square carrying the débris as trophies.

None but the music-hall managers themselves know the extent of the never-ending interferences of the County Council officials, but a C.C. gentleman in the days of the "promenades" made occasional compensating blunders.

A certain door in the old Empire promenade was being redecorated.

"Here, this won't do!" announced the official. "These

painted panels must be replaced by plain white glass so that your officials can see what's going on inside at all times."

"I'm afraid that wouldn't answer," returned stately old Hitchins, quietly.

"And why not, pray?"

"Because," said "Scratchums," with an unchecked yawn, "it's the ladies' lavatory."

The leaseholder and the largest shareholder in the Empire was of course Nicol, of the Cafe Royal, and it was he who nominated H. J. Hitchins as manager, a post he filled for a quarter of a century. Hitchins was one of the most popular men in London, and a very capable *homme d'affaires*, of immense tact, and great social, as well as managerial, ability.

The inevitable close of every Empire ballet was when Madame Katti Lanner came before the curtains in her famous dress of brocaded silk—so stiff that it would almost stand by itself—her gold chain, and flaxen wig, to bow her stately thanks to the audience.

It was a wonderful moment. Equally wonderful was the quarrel the old lady invariably had with the conductor at the last dress-rehearsal. It was blank firing on each side, but it was an exhibition of the ballet-mistress's supreme authority on the stage.

When the first ballet of which Dwarf wrote the book, "Round the Town Again," was produced, George Edwardes said to the author, a little maliciously perhaps:

"Don't let Madame Katti Lanner have it all her own way."

The Dwarf didn't. He stopped a rehearsal—once—to cut out some additions she had made. Madame Lanner came down to the footlights and glared at him:

"It is no longer your ballet!" she shouted. "It is *my* ballet now!"

Katti Lanner had danced as *première danseuse* at most of the opera houses of Europe, and, when a child dancer, had been encouraged by the praise of Cerito and Fanny Elssler.

At the Empire she used to sit during the nightly progress of the ballet in a railed-in seat just behind the frame of the proscenium, and the reward of the *danseuse* who had danced a *pas seul* particularly well was a kiss from the old lady. She danced for exercise till her last days, and at a rehearsal she was always ready to lift her skirts to her ankles and show a dancer how some particular *pas* should be performed.

Another wonderful old lady of the London that is passing so quickly was Madame Nicol, the proprietress of the Café Royal, whose death, in 1916, closed a chapter in the history of the famous restaurant.

Nicol was the name adopted by her husband when he came over to this country from the Paris wine market, and, settling in London, established a little café on the ground which used to be occupied by the front hall of the establishment. The Café Royal some years ago became a limited company, and all the shares were held by the Nicol family.

The present generation only knew Madame Nicol as a stately, white-haired old lady dressed in black, who every day walked through the rooms of the Café Royal to see that everything was in order, and who kept the management of the linen-room in her own hands. She was adverse to any alteration; "as it was in the day of M. Nicol," was usually her final decision when any change was advocated.

The Alhambra is, of course, considerably older than the Empire, and has contrived to retain its music-hall tradition, though the form of entertainment is greatly changed.

Perhaps the most famous product of the old Alhambra was the beautiful Valerie Rhys, who, as Lady Meux, died in 1911.

"Some of the newspapers would give me a good deal for this," once said Lady Meux to Corlett, handing him a letter to read.

And some of the newspapers would undoubtedly have given a good deal for the document, for it was a letter from the then Lord Tweedmouth offering to resign his position as First Lord of the Admiralty, and to retire from politics, provided Lady Meux would withdraw her opposition to him in the great brewery concern. Lord Tweedmouth had at that time a big interest in the business, of which he was a director—while a member of the Radical Government—but Lady Meux's votes swamped the others, and she was not long in ousting Lord Tweedmouth from his position.

Lady Meux was an extraordinary woman. In her youth famous for the beauty of her face and figure, it was not long before she became the wife of Sir Henry Meux, the principal proprietor of Meux's Brewery, and the possessor of great estates at Waltham, Dauntrey and elsewhere. The husband was an easy-going man, managing his vast affairs indifferently,

and it was not long before her ladyship took charge of the helm, and, indeed, of the whole ship.

She was a woman of shrewd insight, of great determination of character, and of a wide knowledge of the world. Her determination of character became more marked than ever after the death of her husband, who left her the whole of his vast fortune, which in her hands was not likely to grow less, in spite of the deterioration in brewery shares.

Lady Meux was exceedingly charitable, but her charitable gifts were the strictest of secrets. In the days of John Burns and the dock strike, the future Cabinet Minister was wont to take from his pocket, day by day, at his meetings, a letter which he said he had received from a lady of title that very morning, in which was enclosed a £100 note, and a promise of continuing the gift daily until the end of the strike. Many doubted the existence of the mysterious lady, but it was Lady Meux. She detested the strike and the political agitators, but her heart bled for the suffering women and children.

She was a woman of many interests, apart from racing, and amongst other things was an ardent Egyptologist.

Lady Meux had an extraordinary collection of jewellery, and Corlett often declared that he had known her sit down to dinner with £30,000 worth of pearls alone upon her. She also set great store on relics of Lord Nelson, and on one occasion when Admirals Lord Charles Beresford and Sir Hedworth Lambton were on a visit to her she presented them each with one.

It was characteristic of her that she formed a stud farm close to her house at Theobalds, so that she could see to it herself. She gave it the closest personal attention, and woe to the man in fault if she saw a single straw awry.

In forming the new stud she had Lord Marcus Beresford as adviser, and it was through him that eight or ten mares were bought at a very high price. High as the price was, the money was well laid out. The state of her nerves would not allow her to watch a race in which one of her horses was engaged, so it was decided to lease them. The first to have an offer of them was James Waugh, of whom she had a very high opinion, but appalled by the many forfeits, he dared not take the risk. It was an unlucky decision, for among the lot was the Derby winner Volodyovski. Lord William Beresford took what Waugh had declined and sent them to Huggins at Heath House. During the winter Volodyovski became favourite for the Derby,

or nearly so, but Lord William met with the accident that proved fatal. His executors claimed the lease, but her ladyship protested.

"No," she said definitely, "I leased the horse to Lord William, and to him alone. They might transfer him to someone to whom I should very much object."

She fought the case and won, and when it was decided, showed Corlett the papers, on which the astute old man wired to Charles Greenwood to back the horse for him for £100, the price obtained being 8 to 1—a very good bet. There was then some hope of leasing the horse to King Edward—then Prince of Wales—but Queen Victoria's death put an end to any negotiations, and Huggins secured him for Mr Whitney, in whose colours he won the Derby, and ought to have won the St. Leger.

One of the harmless caprices of Lady Meux—and she had many—was to name the favourite cows on her farm after the great females of Scripture. Thus one knew that Naomi, or Vashti, or Esther was a good milker, whilst Ruth was so called for her habit of following the bull about: "Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge."

Few evolutions have been stranger than that of the irresponsible, light-hearted little Bohemienne, Val Rhys, of the Alhambra, into Lady Meux, *grande dame*, and enricher of the nobility.

It is curious that a tragic end has been the fate of more than one Leicester Square music-hall manager, and poor George Scott's suicide in a Covent Garden hotel brought a successful management to a close.

Before taking up the management of the Alhambra, Scott was for some time in charge of a Manchester theatre, and, as an illustration of the business instincts of the natives, he was wont to instance a certain call-boy, whose ideas of personal cleanliness left much to be desired.

The youth's attention being called rather peremptorily to the grubby state of his flesh, he retorted, with shrewd Mancunian commonsense:

"Eh, what matters? Where there's moock there's bra-ass!"

It was the same hero who stood aghast, spell-bound, when a band of Tzizanes came down to the provinces and, without rehearsal, played an overture selected by the management.

"The canny beggars!" he cried admiringly, being possessed

THE PITCHER AND GEORGE SCOTT

of the true band instinct of the Northerner; "reads music i' English an' plays it i' Blue Hungarian!"

A great showman was George Scott, as witness the story of the offending chimney-shaft that he once put up at a seaside Kursaal without going through the tedious formality of obtaining official permission. The irate authorities promptly condemned it to be felled within a week, and at first sight the resourceful George seemed to be landed with a dead loss.

Then—then his masterful resource prevailed. The fateful Monday became "Demolition Day."

Twenty thousand sightseers at a shilling a head flocked from far and near to see the big shaft felled. Massed bands struck "Down Went McGinty!"; the basic masonry was chipped away, the iron cap toppled slowly forward, and when the huge column had crashed to the ground, like another Colonne Vendome in an improvised Commune, a dozen cinema men "shot" George Scott and the Mayor shaking hands once more on a heap of broken débris, from which clouds of dust arose slowly with sombre grandeur.

A great showman!

And his managerial tact was much in evidence at a certain cheery dinner at Prince's. Somewhere about nine o'clock the call of duty impelled him to ask the indulgence of his host in order to return to his responsibilities, and this moved the dear old *roué* sitting on his right to press a private request on him.

"I say, old man," he ventured, with the familiarity bred of good food and good wine, "all my life I've longed to go behind the scenes at your place. Can you manage it? I'm game to stand a case of wine for the dear little souls and—and—what?"

The manager's reply was in the affirmative, but was not unconditional.

"Righto," he whispered confidentially, "but don't come along during the ballet. Our stage is so crowded that the stage manager gets ratty if he sees strangers blocking the wings. But I happen to know that he's going off early to-night, so pop round quietly about—about—let me see—about twenty-five minutes past ten."

"A thousand thanks, dear old man!" cried the lover of life behind the scenes enthusiastically, with a fervent if festive handshake. "By the way, what'll be on the stage at twenty-five minutes past ten?"

And the variety manager disengaged his hand, and began to move away as he whispered, mysteriously :

" The cinematograph, dear old fellow—the cinematograph ! "

In those halcyon days—and a post-war generation must forgive the regretful look backwards—great was the rivalry between the two great Leicester Square houses, and at luncheon-time the Cavour—the restaurant patronised by the rival staffs—was wont to hum with rumours of attractions and counter-attractions. So keen was the competition that it was reported that when at last the exhumation order was made which was to decide for good and all whether the coffin contained the mysterious Duke of Portland, or merely Druce of the Baker Street Bazaar, George Scott had stolen a march on his brother manager by camping outside the cemetery gates with a cast-iron contract in his hand, ready to " book " the occupant of the coffin for the Alhambra in the event of his turning out to be the eccentric Duke.

One of the biggest coups at the Alhambra during the Scott régime was the engagement of the Zancigs, whose exhibitions of mental telepathy set all London talking. As Zancig passed amongst the audience, receiving objects of every sort and description, madame, blindfolded on the stage would describe the article. And numerous were the attempts to confound the pair.

On one memorable evening, as the bespectacled Zancig passed among the audience, and with golden simplicity and tranquil faith asked to be confounded, a well-known *bon vivant*, whose taste in woman, wine and song was reputed to be beyond cavil, and who had been watching the performance with amused disdain, drew from the tail-pocket of his dress coat a number of letters.

" Any one of these you fancy," he laughed, and the placid Dane pulled one at random from the centre of the cluster. Then, with his back to the stage, he drew the letter from its envelope, and called to his wife to describe it.

" It is written on mauve paper in violet ink," she announced across the footlight, in cold, penetrating tones, " and it runs : ' Dear, darling old duckilumps, Oo is a very, very bad boy to drink so much of the bubbly as Oo did last night ; nevertheless I make haste to let you know that we found your black pearl scarf-pin under the chair. But none of us—— ' "

But as at this interesting juncture the " subject " hastily leapt up and grabbed the billet from the telepathist's hand, the

audience failed to learn exactly what it was that " none of us " failed in.

It was in the Cavour, after the show, that Zancig, a modest little man, was explaining to Pitcher that he had never claimed possession of one half the scientific powers the more captious of his critics strenuously denied him.

" It is simply dis," continued he, " that at any hour or in any place, whatever I gaze on or whatever I place my hand upon, Madame can see clearly."

" Then," replied Pitcher, very gravely, " I only hope for your own sake that if you are not a strictly moral husband you possess the power to—er—to ring Madame off occasionally."

A great character was poor little Philippe of the Cavour, and it is perhaps as well for his peace of mind that he passed in his final check before the dawn of a restricted and " Pussyfoot " era, for above all things did he loathe a teetotaller, and the Cavour bill-of-fare ever bore the stereotyped line: " Abstainers and iced-water drinkers 6d extra."

On one occasion four abstemious youths of the ginger-ale-with-meat school were feeding at the table next to that at which the " patron " himself regularly took his meals, and having eaten their way straight through the list the spokesman called his waiter.

" Garcon," said the youth, " go to that overcoat hanging over there, and bring me my cigar-case."

The obedient Max did as he was bid, and the gaseous quartet lit four amber-hued, dangerous-looking cigars.

This slight upon the tobacco of his establishment was too much for the irascible little Philippe, and, stung to the quick, he beckoned Max, and ordered him to render the bill at once. Of course loud-voiced, indignant remonstrances followed.

" It's quite right; I want your table," growled Philippe, when sent for; " and I give you good tip also,—to-morrow night table d'hôte at Salmon and Gluckstein ! "

In the kitchen-garden behind the Cavour the very rhubarb beds were marked out by champagne flagons thrust neck downwards into the grateful earth—a noble sight !

" The rhubarb ? Oh, I cannot charge you for it ! " old Philippe would say with a smile. " You would protest at the price. It cost me to grow it nine-pound-ten a stick ! "

In those days of intense theatrical rivalry the Cavour was the music-hall restaurant par excellence for lunch. Not only was

it frequented by the powers behind the scenes—the impresarios, managers, and music-hall agents and their curious entourages, mysterious gentlemen who sold jewellery to rising stars, and the sporting element—but the performers themselves were also in evidence.

And some of the performers who had fame suddenly thrust upon them were a trifle quaint.

On one occasion, for example, at the table next to Pitcher and myself sat nine feet odd in height of Russian humanity—there had been a "boom" in giants—and his expression was amusing when he became aware that, a few tables off, sat his great rival, also nine feet something or other.

But Giant No. 1 had a sense of humour, and sent his compliments by the waiter to Giant No. 2, asking him if he would care to come and play a *small* part in the sender's sketch at the Coliseum.

The whole restaurant breathed a sigh of relief when Giant No. 2 laughed. Imagine the results of a conflict between eighteen or nineteen feet of solid humanity in the confined space of a restaurant.

But the two great Leicester Square halls by no means had things their own way, for under the Butt *régime* the Palace was a formidable rival, and, from the social point of view, a Society with the big S, the Palace led. The Maud Allan "boom" brought the Asquiths and their political and artistic set, and the early triumphs of the Russians, with the incomparable Pavlova and Mordkin, placed the Palace at the head of affairs in its own particular line.

The Cambridge Circus house had a *cachet* of its own, and jealously preserved its distinction, the spirit of friendly rivalry extending to every department,—not forgetting the magnificent orchestras, of which that at the Palace was under the direction of Herman Finck, the wittiest musician in London, while the Alhambra musicians were under the baton of George Byng. Newcomers to the programme were not allowed to forget the distinction of the Palace. As witness.

A rehearsal of new artistes was running its course when there blew in upon the stage the latest thing in American vaudeville. Hanging its buffalo robe on a painted tree, and telling an imaginary audience that it had just escaped from a business college, it strode down to the footlights and gazed expectantly at the conductor—for its musical score had yet to be arranged.

HERMAN FINCK

" G'wan naow—bing! bing! bing! " it cried impatiently. The composer of " In the Shadows " laid down his baton.

" That ' Byng, Byng, Byng ' business would be all right if you were working at the Alhambra further down the road," said he, " but if you want to get along with *me*, you'll have to change it to ' Finck! Finck! Finck! ' "

But once upon a time even Finck was unable to rise to the occasion. For years anguished composers and music publishers have waged war on the music pirate, but the snake is only scotched, not killed, and ever and again bobs up.

One day after leaving the Palace Theatre—when the Palace Theatre *was* the Palace Theatre—Herman Finck stood transfixed and speechless on the kerb outside Scott's in Coventry Street, while an ingenuous hawker laid a grubby, detaining hand on his sleeve and blurted:

" 'Ere, captain, I sees you've got a musical ear—' In the Shadows '—words an' music same as the copyright—tuppence! "

The Palace soon acquired a reputation for beauty and wit—and lived up to it.

One night as poor, merry, golden-haired little Gaby Deslys shot her final dazzling smile at the orchestra and tripped off the stage, an enthusiast in the upper circle woke from his reverie, and, turning, eyed the somewhat shapeless bundle at his side with savage contempt.

" An' you," he sneered, " *you* wear flannel! You would! "

" But flannel's 'ealthy, Jim! " the patient creature wailed.

" Damn 'ealth! " he snarled.

The Russian successes at the Palace produced the inevitable crowd of imitators, and one such, a large and lavish lady from Oldham, Wigan or some such Tartar backblock, was disporting herself at a trial rehearsal with a band of assistant *coryphées*. Poor George Bull, a member of the Palace staff, watched with serene disapproval.

" Well," observed someone, " what do you think of the new ' Russian ' ? "

" Funny without being Volga," observed George calmly.

The death of George Bull in the early days of the war eclipsed the gaiety of many little coteries.

They said that he did not realise his sentence, but the last time we dined together at the Café Royal he ate nothing, left his wine untasted, and, looking like a ghost, fired off a hundred

of his quaint views on life and things in general. As we rose to go on to the Palace, he paused, looked at the deserted table, and, reaching over, turned down an empty glass.

I remember standing at the back of the Palace Theatre stalls with George Bull on the last night of a pre-war Lauder season, listening to the famous comedian's farewell speech on his departure to make pots of money in Australia.

In a gulpy, emotional voice the great Scot spoke of the pe-rr-r-r-ils o' the deep, of the r-r-remote Antipodes, of his love for the audience, and the uncer-r-tainty o' human life. No one could say with cer-r-r-tainty what micht happen durin' his for-r-rthcomin' tourr—what Fate micht hae in store in those r-r-remote r-r-regions o' the airth, and so forth, and so on.

With twitching face George sucked in the solemn words; in awed silence he listened to the sobful strains of "Auld Lang Syne," and he absolutely shivered with apprehension as the curious little figure stepped for the last time between the great golden curtains.

Then reason came to his aid:

"B-but," he blurted, as one awakening to stern reason, "why the hell does he go, then?"

And talking of Sir Harry Lauder.

One wonderful day a bunch of enthusiastic Scots presented Harry Lauder and George Tawde (of "Bunty" and Barrie fame) with a copy of Burns and a fountain-pen apiece.

Said Tawde to Lauder: "Hairry, ah'm thinkin' this fountain pen is going to cost a deal of money."

"An' hoo dae ye mak' that oot, George?" said Lauder to Tawde.

"It'll want keepin' in ink."

"Hoot, mon!"—and the great Harry laughed merrily, "ye can always fill it up at the wee bit deskie at the post office, whiles ye preten' to write a telegram!"

Nearly every problem has its solution.

Which reminds me.

In those half-forgotten war-days which preceded the terrible peace, a wounded Scot and a wounded Irishman were discussing the then state of Ireland at a Palace matinée for wounded soldiers, and, feeling running high, the discussion descended from the general to the particular.

"Oh, *damn* Ireland!" exclaimed the Scottie contemptuously.

"An' *damn* Scotland!" retorted the Irish boy, with whole-hearted warmth.

"An' to hell with the Pope as well!" cried the Scot, going one better.

"An' to hell with Harry Lauder!" yelled the Irish lad triumphantly.

When the Palace, amid much jealousy and heart-burnings, at last achieved the distinction of being the scene of a "royal command" performance, its status seemed assured for all time, but, alas, it is a mutable world.

Great was the excitement in music-hall circles over that "command," and great was the backbiting and sarcastic were the comments over the inclusions and non-inclusions in the programme.

But "commands" almost invariably have a certain amount of excitement attached to them.

Let it never be forgotten that one of the very few people to forsee Armageddon was Jimmy Glover, who, as long ago as 1911, on the occasion of the State Performance at Drury Lane before the Kaiser, followed up a rendering of Wilhelm's own composition—"The Song of Aegir, by H.I.M. the German Emperor"—with a stirring performance of "Wake Up, England!"—"by James Glover."

Jimmy Glover was not the only observant soul to foresee the German menace.

In that same "command" appeared George Graves, and he took a pessimistic view of things from the start. Said he in later days:

"When we were rehearsing 'Money' to play before the Kaiser I knew there'd be trouble; and when I saw him patting his bad hand all the evening in the weak attempt to applaud actors who didn't know their lines, I said to myself: 'If this doesn't bring on war with Germany, I'll be blowed!'"

But then Jimmy, as civic potentate and as competition judge, should be used to diplomatic emergencies.

Official personages often receive curious requests, and a Most Worshipful Mayor of Bexhill, having assumed the robes of office and delivered a brief but weighty address on the majesty of the law and the impartiality with which, during his term of office he intended to dispense it, tempering always justice with mercy, and fairmindedness with both, then announced that he was in readiness to hear petitions.

"Hear! Hear!" cried an elderly lodging-house female, stepping into the box. "I ask your lordship's advice and assistance. My w.c. is stopped up."

It was too much for even Jimmy Glover's Celtic humour.

It was through a "command performance" that Herman Finck accidentally overheard King Edward's personal and private opinions on Germany and things German.

To celebrate Queen Alexandra's birthday the King had "commanded" a performance at Sandringham, and amongst the folk who went down were "The Follies"—who were then at the Palace Theatre—Alfred Butt, and Herman Finck.

As the company left town at noon and were not to ring up until 10 p.m., the wait was long and trying. Poor Harry Pelissier worked himself into a state of semi-idiocy, and by the time 10 o'clock drew near, hardly anyone was in the state of calm dignity which seems to prevail in all royal establishments. Meanwhile, Finck had made a discovery for himself. It appeared that the Queen objected to an orchestra between herself and the stage, and that all the music was to be behind the scenes.

Imagine therefore, the duettists, Finck and Pelissier, who were to play the overture to the Follies, seated at a cottage-piano, in semi-darkness, peering anxiously at the conductor of the royal band, who, on the other side of the stage, was awaiting the entrance of the Royal party to strike up the National Anthem.

Several nerves cracked, and one member of the Follies, Lewis Sydney, went for a walk to endeavour to compose himself. He returned looking scared, and somewhat uncertain as to what had happened. It seemed that he had found himself in a long gallery, hung with pictures, and, to compose his nerves, began to take an interest in art, when folding doors opened, and a personage in what at a hurried glance appeared to be a Field Marshal's uniform, his breast covered with medals, entered with stately step. Sydney stared hard at a picture, and wondered frantically whether it was the etiquette to drop on one knee or both, when the Field Marshal stopped, stooped, and, from a tiny cupboard in the wainscot extracted a duster and small brush, turned and left.

Nor was this all.

Through another pair of doors appeared a procession—this time of two Field Marshals, one bearing in his extended arms a

"A BUTT-RESS OF EMPIRE"
(SIR ALFRED BUTT)
Caricature by Ralph Rowland

long white object which the startled onlooker afterwards vowed to be a Royal infant on its way to a State baptism. The doors closed behind the pomp, and Sydney fled back to his companions.

Meanwhile, the duettists sat perspiring in the dark, and at last Pelissier could stand it no longer.

"For God's sake," he appealed to Finck, "go and ask the royal conductor what's the matter. Something awful has happened!"

Finck went across.

"No," replied the royal conductor, "nothing awful. The King spilt some soup at dinner and is changing his shirt."

Sydney's "Royal infant" was the "Royal shirt."

At last the performance commenced. The duettists came to the Follies' skit on German Opera, and even from where the players sat in darkness, pounding at the cottage piano, they could hear King Edward's great laugh, and his deep-voiced explanations and comments upon things German. He knew his Germany, and his hearers gathered that his admiration for it was not excessive.

After the Follies' performance came Finck's special trial.

During the change of scene, the Bioscope—then more or less of a novelty—was to be shown, and from the little corner in the darkness the composer was to play descriptive music to the pictures. As he could see nothing of the screen George Ashton stood in the wings and called the subjects to him.

"River!" hissed Ashton, and the river music rippled.

"Train!" came the voice, and the journey started, but hardly was steam up when the voice sounded again:

"Cavalry, quick! Train's over!"

The piano player was rapidly approaching nervous collapse when he became conscious of strange things happening around him in the darkness, of dim forms moving, of muffled thumps, and a strained whispering.

"Boats!" murmured Ashton appealingly, when another voice broke in, in tense fury: "Where the devil *is* that table? Put it here, you——!"

"Zoological Gardens, *quick!*" pleaded the prompter, and "*Will* you put that infernal chair down here!" continued the irate whisper.

"Review," and on pounded the musician, when, "Oh, for *God's* sake take that infernal piano out of the way!" cried a

spirit voice, and the piano rose on invisible hands and started to move, the pianist following it into the darkness, tripping, stumbling, perspiring, but playing, always playing, till the pace grew too hot, just as Ashton cried: "Curtain!"

Then the lights went up and revealed the stage hands hard at work setting the stage for "Pantaloon."

Exhausted, nerve-wracked, Finck staggered into the artistes' room, where stood Sydney's Field Marshal beside a table bearing things upon it.

"First aid!" he gasped.

"Orangeade, sir?" repeated the Field Marshal approvingly. "Most certainly! It is Her Majesty's favourite refreshment!" And, not daring to correct the mistake, Finck suffered him to select the orangeade decanter from the goodly ranks.

But, as at all "commands," everything ended happily, in compliments, kudos, and presentation scarf-pins.

And talking of presentation scarf-pins.

It was during the present reign that the usual worshipping matinée crowd hung round the stage-door waiting for a close view of their idol, and a murmur of admiration and adoration arose from beautiful girlish throats as the brilliant young actor-manager passed to his car.

"Isn't he *thrilling*? Doesn't he look beautiful?" cooed one dear little lady; "*did* you notice that he wears his initials on his scarf-pin?"

"No, dear," corrected the other dear little lady firmly, "the 'G.' and the 'M.' are not for 'Gerald du Maurier,' they're for 'Gerald' and 'Muriel'—his wife, you know!"

And so it was that the glamour of a Windsor "command" and a "George and Mary" souvenir dwindled into nothingness in the fierce light that beats upon the stage-door.

The "behind the scenes" of "command" performances are not wholly unamusing, and on one occasion a "command" was fairly wheedled out of King Edward by an astute music-hall performer.

It was Cowes week, and Golden, the performer in question, who had made a big hit at the Palace Theatre, was performing at the Brighton Alhambra. One morning, calling at the music-hall for letters, he was handed the wire:

"Golden, Alhambra, Brighton. Want you appear Egypt House, Cowes, to-night. Most important. Duchess of Manchester."

The performer needed no telling that Royalty was to be entertained, nor did he see why he should not get the full flavour and every other little thing that was coming to him; wherefore he replied to the Duchess:

"Much regret cannot persuade Barrasford to release me."

This brought from the petulant Duchess:

"Barrasford must release you to entertain the King."

At once Golden saw that the race was won—that they were as good as "paying over it in Moscow." His crafty reply ran:

"If His Majesty commands I must obey."

And back came the coveted reply:

"His Majesty commands you to appear at Egypt House, Cowes, to-night."

It was an ingenuous little piece of diplomacy—but it brought home the monographed ruby and diamond scarf-pin all the same.

But the mention of "command" performances reminds me of an artless little observation made by a printer during an endless newspaper correspondence on the suitability—or desirability—of Shakespearean plays for these State functions. Said he:

"Shakespeare? D'you know, sir, that until last night I'd never read any of that feller's stuff? But I got talked into it, and after I got home an' 'ad a bit o' supper, I set to an' waded right through 'The Rape of Lucrece.' What did I think of it? Oh, padded to death! I could ha' got it all in a 'stickful.'"

Probably there has never been a "command" programme issued which has not been subjected to the ironic comments of the disappointed, the jealous and the highbrowed, and it must be admitted that on occasions the irony has been justifiable. For instance, not since Queen Victoria, listening to the band, asked Dan Godfrey the name of the march that had just been played, and Dan, blushing redder than his tunic, perforce admitted the title: "'Come Where the Booze is Cheaper,' Your Majesty," had such queer titles appeared on a Royal programme as were down for the big Palace "command" in the July of 1912. Nor, on the other hand, was ever a music-hall song more glorified in a quotation than when O. Henry, the short story genius, passed away. Finding the shades of death descending on him, he asked the nurse to bring a candle to his bedside. She asked him what for.

"I'm afraid to go home in the dark," he quoted grimly.

From " command " performances to special matinees is but a step, and they are alike in one respect, in that they press heavily upon the already hard-worked and obscure behind-the-curtain staff, for whom there is small kudos, and little reward in the way of publicity, social or professional. Thus it came about that as the curtain went up for the eleventh show in six days of a Keats-Shelley festival at the Haymarket Theatre, an overwrought stage-hand, all a-weary, yet sustained by a consciousness of duty nobly done, pencilled on the white-washed wall:

" I've had enough to fill my belly
For all my life of Keats and Shelley."

XVIII

THE HALLS

The End of a Phase—The London Pavilion—The Habitués of Old—The Chairman—The Great Macdermott—The Original "Pav."—Some Old-time "Stars"—Jenny Hill and Her Songs—Bessie Bellwood—"Wot cher, 'Ria?"—George Leybourne—"Champagne Charlie," and Other Choruses—"The Great Vance"—"Slap Bang!"—"The Comic Lion's Successes—Arthur Lloyd—The Last of the "Lions"—Lloyd's Songs—The Great Macdermott—A Tichborne Quarrel—Disraeli and "By Jingo!"—Macdermott's Songs—"Charlie Dilke"—Polyglot Choruses—"All the Stars".

WITH the conversion of the Pavilion and Oxford into beautiful ultra-modern theatres, and the demolition of the old Tivoli, a phase of West End music-hall history came to an end.

Heaven forbid that one should be a mere *laudator temporis acti*—there is no one more tedious, unless it be the confirmed depreciator of the past and bigoted believer in the present—but I, for one, am glad to have witnessed a phase of entertainment which was at times amusing, and which has left many amusing memories.

When at the private view one stood in the balcony of the handsome theatre which Mr C. B. Cochran constructed out of the London Pavilion, and saw all society in the rose-coloured *baignoires*, one's mind went back to the not very distant days when ladies would have been horrified at the idea of being seen in a music-hall, and when smoking in a real theatre was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain. And as one gazed at the stage, which had been famous in its day, one's mind went back to the celebrities who had drawn all male London to the theatre in the amusing days of old.

And, believe me, they were amusing.

The last idea with which one turned into a hall—whether it was the Pavilion, or the Empire, the Tivoli, or the Alhambra—somewhere about nine, was the idea of sitting penned in one's stall amongst total strangers. Each hall had its habitués; the habitués were typical of the hall, and there were subtle distinctions. The black-coated, white-shirted, silk-hatted crowd

of young "bloods" who filled the promenades of the great Leicester Square houses in the "intervals" differed vastly from those one found in the Strand or in Piccadilly Circus; but in each crowd there was an intimacy, the intimacy born of coteries which frequently meet and whose aim is to enjoy life.

The "Pink 'Un" association with the Pavilion dated back to the early 'seventies, when Lennard helped Charlie Williams, of "The Union Jack of Old England" fame, with some verses of a topical song he was singing, an immortal stanza of which included the lines:

> "Washer-women have struck,
> So what's a poor fellow to do?
> Dirty shirts and hot weather!
> Oh, lather and soap!
> Protection in seventy-two!"

In the 'seventies, for the sum of sixpence you could put your elbows on the stage of the London Pavilion. Seats at marble tables at the sides of the stage cost sixpence, while for half-a-crown you could reserve a seat at the chairman's table.

The chairman, Harry Cavendish, the absolute controller of stage and audience, was of superb presence and incredible cubic capacity. August as he was, he was the Great Macdermott's butt in "Better than nothing at all."

Mac: "And now I'll be friendly, all quarrels I'll sink:
I'll stand glasses round; how much can you drink?"

Audience: "Not much!"

Mac: "Here, Harry! You said 'Not much.' A little drop in a barrel—three hoops up!" (pointing to the chairman, who promptly raised his glass).

In those days, the programme at the "Pav." was merely the current number of "The Entr'Acte," with the names of the performers—afterwards to be loudly announced by "The Chair"—printed on a full page facing one of Alf Bryan's cartoons, and the cost was one penny—a newspaper and programme for one penny! There were invariably eighteen or twenty turns, and the performance began at 7.30 and finished just at midnight. There were bars and waiters everywhere;

excellent bitter ale was sold at twopence a glass, and the frugal-minded could be uproarious on eighteenpence.

In the 'seventies there was no Empire, no Alhambra, and no Palace. Most of the music-halls in London were attached to a public-house, and the entertainment offered would now be thought incredibly vulgar. Where the Victoria Palace now stands was the Standard, a popular resort, where the stage jutted into a room, on the first floor, and the performers were able to exchange pleasantries with the audience, who sat around little tables in the French *café chantant* style.

It was here that George Leybourne could be heard singing "Champagne Charlie," and amongst other favourites of the period were Arthur Lloyd, Jolly John Nash, Walter Laburnan, Fred Coyne, Pat Riley, and Herbert Campbell. James Fawn came to the front later, and the Great Macdermott and Vance reached the height of their popularity in the 'eighties.

The original "Pav." was little more than a barn, oblong in shape, with a gallery on one side and boxes on the other. It was supposed to have occupied the site of Dr Kahn's Anatomical Museum. The original building had been a swimming bath—and looked it: the old dressing cabins must have been utilised for the private boxes. The proprietor was a Mr Loibl, who was reported to have been a waiter at Scott's.

The first change for the better came after Loibl's death, and in 1880 the Pavilion was under the management of Mr Villiers. When it was turned into a company, Mr Harry T. Smith (usually called "Tom," and a son of the original Tom Smith of cracker fame) was on the board of directors.

In those days one did not always go for the entertainment alone, and the bars took more money than the box-office. Nevertheless, the audiences worshipped at the shrines of Jenny Hill (The Vital Spark), Bessie Bellwood and Vesta Tilley.

Jenny Hill had a raucous voice, but she made her audiences laugh immoderately, especially when she gave her account of a coster's wedding: she was a clever actress with expressive gestures, and her articulation in speaking and singing made every syllable heard.

Here are some scraps from Jenny Hill's big successes:

"K'rect card! K'rect card!
Won't you buy a card, sir?
Things are very queer just now.
And times are very hard.

Not a soul to help me up!
Lots to keep me down!
Won't you help an honest lad
To earn an honest crown?"

There was a crude realism in this one:

"Outside, Liza! Not this bar!
Not this bar! Not this bar!
Outside, Liza! Not this bar!
I've told you so before!"

And London loved "Good Old London Bill":

"If you hear a fellow singing late at night—
That's Bill!
Who, when his wish he's got,
And up three p'licemen trot
He downs the blessed lot—
That's Bill—that's Bill!
That's good old London Bill!"

The last line of "'Arry" passed into slanguage:

"Oh, 'Arry, what 'Arry!
There you are then, 'Arry!
I say, 'Arry, by Jove you are a don!
Oh, 'Arry, 'Arry!
There you are then, 'Arry!
Where are you going on Sunday?
I see you've got 'em on!"

An immense favourite was "Maggie Murphy's Home":

"On Sunday night it's my delight
And pleasure, don't you see,
Meeting all the girls and all the boys
That work down town with me.
A bedroom and a parlour
Is all we call our home
But you're welcome every evening
At Maggie Murphy's home!"

An anticipation of the modern "vamp":

"I'm awfully wicked, I'm awfully bad,
The 'worstest' young woman the world ever had.
From my birth I was always a reg'lar young cat,
And I glory in anything wrong."

There might be a chance nowadays for a revival of "If I Only Bossed the Show"—it is still bitterly topical:

"I'd wake men from their torpor, and every foreign pauper
That helps to make the sweater rich, and wages always low,
I'd send aboard a ship, sir, for an everlasting trip, sir,
And a chance give to the English if I only bossed the show!"

Many stories are told of Jenny Hill's humble origin, but I believe that in the story of Joe Cave's life, which was prepared by Bob Soutar and published in "The Man of the World," the true account can be found. Cave gave her an engagement to play one of the legs of a goose in his pantomime, "Mother Goose," at the old Aquarium Theatre, since called the Imperial. She became apprenticed to a country publican as a general servant and serio-comic singer to amuse his customers. Later, she married an acrobat, and her daughter became known to the music-hall public as Peggy Pryde. Another of the songs in which she made a great success was "Sweet Violets."

Bessie Bellwood's *genre* was somewhat different.

Bessie was a positive genius, and her name on the bill would always guarantee crowded houses at the Pavilion. Her song, "Wot cher, Ria?" was a music-hall classic, and her Whitechapel buffoonery was a delight to the town. Many of her songs had literary merit, and I believe Shifter had something to do with the writing of "Aubrey Plantagenet, the Hero of the Penny Novelette."

Here are a verse and chorus of the famous "Wot cher, Ria?":

"I am a gal what's doing very well
In the vegitible line,
And as I've saved a bob or two
I thought I'd cut a shine.

So I goes into a music 'all
Where I'd often been afore;
I didn't go in the galler-y
But on the bottom floor.
I sit me down quite comfy like
An' calls for a pot of stout.
My pals in the gallery spotted me
An' all commenced to shout:

Wot cher, Ria!
Ria's on the job!
Wot cher, Ria!
Did you speculate a bob?
Oh, Ria, she's a toff
An' she looks immensikoff,
An' they all shouted 'Wot cher, Ria?'"

The chorus of "Aubrey Plantaganet" ran:

"Aubrey Plantagenet, can you imagine it?
Eyes like the stars so bright, hair black as jet.
No one knows his history; he's a perfect mystery.
Oh, for the hero of a penny novelette!"

Another famous chorus:

"Kennington Road, Kennington Road,
That's where you'll find my little abode.
Knock at the door with a rat-a-tat-tat,
And I'll show you my wedding-ring under the mat!"

Other favourites of Bessie's were:

"He's getting interested in the new woman, is he?
I'll pay him interest, I'll keep him busy.
I'll give him 'woman,' I'll teach him 'new':
I'll make him interested in the old woman, too!"

And:

"Has anyone seen my Mary Ann?
She packed up her traps and away she ran.
I tried hard to stop her, as well as I could
But she said if she wanted to go she would.

She's a kind friend in London to give her a start,
And help her to be a Society 'tart.'
And then she would marry a nobleman.
Oh! Has anyone seen my Mary Ann?"

"The Pro's Coachman" had a certain actuality that appealed to old-time audiences:

"First he's on at the Tivoli,
Then he's on at the 'Pav.'
Then comes out and begins to shout:
'Fifteen minutes you have!'
Back again to the Paragon,
Then again to the Royal,"

and so on and so forth.

Another:

"Good old Boss; good old sort!
We respect you, so we ought!
Come what may; come what might,
We say this much: You're alright!"

The Bellwood type had its lineal descendants in such artists as Marie Lloyd and Marie Loftus, whom the present generation remember, but the "comic lion" of the past has left no offspring. Times change, and the methods, for instance, of Mr Whit Cunliffe and Mr George Lashwood differ widely from those of such celebrities as George Leybourne, Vance, the Great Macdermott, and Arthur Lloyd.

George Leybourne, "The Longitudinal Lion of Laughter," as Sam Collins, the founder of Collins's Music Hall, styled him, or "The Lion Comic"—not "comique"—was born in Newcastle. He started life as an engineer, ran away from home, and in the name of Joe Saunders started on the career that was to make his real name a household word and fill his pockets with gold and his glass with champagne.

As "Joe Saunders," Leybourne commenced singing at little "sing-songs" connected with various taverns in the East End, for which no charge for admission was made, the proprietor profiting by the sale of drinks and edibles ranging from fried fish to hot codlins. "Joe Saunders" made his first professional

appearance at the Oriental Music Hall, Poplar, near the Apollo, where he also appeared, on the site of which afterwards arose the Queen's Music Hall. The Oriental opened on September 2nd, 1861, and was turned into a theatre in 1865.

It was in 1865 that "Joe Saunders" first appeared in his own name of George Leybourne, and was booked by Charles Roberts, the agent, at the Philharmonic Hall, where he sang his then popular song "Chang the Giant," and commenced to become famous. It was about this time that Leybourne wrote for himself the immortal "Champagne Charlie," Alfred Lee, later musical editor of the music-publishing house of Charles Sheard, of Holborn, composing the melody, and it was during the singing of "Champagne Charlie" that William Holland, "the People's Caterer," who cultivated the appearance of Napoleon III, heard him and captured him, giving him the necessary "boom" that made Leybourne for all time.

William Holland engaged Leybourne for the Canterbury, and provided him with a wonderful fur coat and a coach drawn by four greys. The greys were ridden by postilions, and Leybourne's entourage supplied the nobility and gentry of the neighbourhood with something like a sensation. Leybourne's coach and four were promptly burlesqued by the appearance of another "humorist," who startled the mob by careering along in a costermonger's barrow drawn by four donkeys.

As Vance's greatest lyric was "Slap Bang," so Leybourne's was "Champagne Charlie." Some authorities aver that Leybourne and Lee, the authors, sold the song to Charles Sheard for the sum of one pound. Others say it fetched as much as five pounds! But the speedy popularity of "Champagne Charlie" induced Messrs Hopwood and Crew, the publishers, to offer the authors £500 each for the song. Charles Sheard, however, could not see the advantage of parting with what looked like becoming a valuable property, so he soothed the troubled bosoms of the authors by presenting them with an additional "little cheque."

Here is the chorus of "Champagne Charlie":

"Champagne Charlie is my name!
Champagne Charlie is my name!
Good for any game at night, my boys,
Good for any game at night, my boys,

Champagne Charlie is my name!
Champagne Charlie is my name!
Good for any game at night, boys,
Who'll come and join me in a spree?"

Another song of Leybourne's in the early 'sixties was "She Danced Like a Fairy; or, She Doated on Leybourne," written by Leybourne and composed by J. Dudley:

"She danced like a fairy and sang like a bird,
She did, on my word, but rather absurd,
She doated on Leybourne, a man that you've heard,
And so she skedaddled from me."

Then there was "The Comet of the West; or, Stand Aside":

"Shout, boys, shout and let's be jolly,
Stand aside and let this swell go past;
I like to do the grand with a short cane in my hand,
For, by Jove, you see the comet's come at last!"

"The Barber's Apprentice Boy" was another song written and composed by Leybourne:

"Then Hokey Pokey Winkey Wum,
It did the mind destroy
Of William Brown of Horseleydown,
The Barber's Apprentice Boy."

G. W. Hunt, the old-time music hall song-writer, wrote many songs for Leybourne, one of the most popular being "The Belle of the Ball":

"This is the belle of the ball, dear boy,
This is the belle of the ball, dear boy,
This is the best of them all, dear boy,
She is the belle of the ball."

"After the Opera" was a favourite number written and composed by Leybourne:

"After the opera's over,
Attending the ladies is done,
We gems of the very first water
Commence with our frolic and fun."

The following choruses are from some of Leybourne's best known songs:

"Oh, love! beautiful love!
Love 'tis that makes a man feel so peculiar;
Oh, love! beautiful love!
A man's but a fool if he falls in love."

"Captain Cuff, Captain Cuff, you can tell me by my collar,
Captain Cuff, Captain Cuff, though I'm not worth half-a-dollar,
I'm awfully stiff in style, as my cigarette I puff,
They cry: 'Hi! Clear the way, here comes Captain Cuff!'"

"This is what I saw when dreaming,
As plain as plain could be:
They were, oh, so content, they never paid rent,
Fifty miles under the sea."

"Don't make a noise, or else you'll wake the baby,
Don't make a noise, or else you'll wake the child,
Don't make a row, or you'll disturb the infant,
I feel so awfully, awfully jolly, I think I shall go wild."

"Oh, why did she leave her Jeremiah?
Why did she go without saying adieu?
When trouble came she looked much higher,
Isn't it funny what money will do?"

"Oh, Emma! Whoa, Emma!
Emma, this will never do!
Whoa, Emma! Oh, Emma!
Emma, I'm ashamed of you!"

"I'm called Parisian 'Arry, 'cause I'm so fond of Paree,
I'm a proper sort of swell they all can see;
As I does my promenade down the jolly bullevard,
All the pretty French girls are spoons on me."

"Encore! Encore! we'll have one glass more,
Encore! Encore! we must have one more.
Encore! Encore! and then au revoir,
And we'll all go sailing home."

" When you've got money you're a brick, brick, brick!
When you've got money all your pals will stick;
But when you've got no money, the world has lost its honey:
You find you're up a tree if you want tick, tick!"

" The man in the moon is looking, love,
He's winking, love, he's blinking, love;
And each little star can tell where you are,
The man in the moon is looking."

" Stick it up, chalk it up, stick it up, my little dear,
The exchequer's low and time's doosid queer;
Stick it up, stick it up, stick it up, my little dear,
You must wait till my ship's come home."

" Ting! Ting! That's How the Bell Goes!" was written and composed for Leybourne by Joseph Tabrar:

" Ting! Ting! that's how the bell goes,
Ting! Ting! a pretty young thing;
If you'll be my wife, then I'll buy the ring,
And have servants to wait on the Ting! Ting! Ting!"

" Cerulea was beautiful, Cerulea was fair;
She lived with her grandma in Bloomsbury Square.
She was once my Hunkydoodleum, but now, alas! she
Plays Kissy-Kissy with an officer in the Artilleree!"

" So who's coming out for a midnight ramble?
Who's coming out for a jolly good spree?
I'll be the organ, you turn the handle,
I'll stand the exes! Wallop with me!"

" ' Oh, George, tell 'em to stop! '
That was the way of Maria;
The more she cried ' Whoa! '
They said ' Let it go! '
And the swing went a little bit higher!"

" La-di-da with the ladies,
That's the style that suits
With the noble frame
And the glorious name
Of Captain de Wellington Boots."

"My Maria's a fairy queen,
Fairest creature ever was seen,
Round she goes on her dainty toes
Her dear little tootsie-waltzers.
You should hear them say 'Encore!'
She's the girl that I adore.
My love, she's honest, tho' she's poor,
And she's all the world to me."

Others of Leybourne's songs which were equally popular were "Little Flora stands behind the Bar," "Mouse-traps, Mouse-traps, Who'll Buy?" and "The Last 'Bus."

John Read, another old-time song-writer, who for many years was chairman at Collins', wrote for Leybourne, "Good-bye, Polly":

"Good-bye, Polly, I must leave you,
Let us hope the parting will not grieve you.
The ship it sails to-day, some thousands of miles away,
So think of me when I am on the sea."

"Champagne," a companion song to "Champagne Charlie," was another popular lyric of Leybourne's. It was written by T. L. Clay and composed by Alfred Lee:

"Champagne, see, see it sparkling,
Winking and beaming, fizzing and creaming;
Champagne, nectar of nectars,
Give me a bumper of bright champagne."

"Moet and Chandon," too, was a typical Leybourne number. This is the chorus:

"Champagne Charlie was my name,
Drinking champagne gained my fame;
So of old when on the spree,
Moet and Chandon's the wine for me."

In a list of Leybourne's songs omission must not be made of "If Ever I Cease to Love." It was one of Leybourne's most successful ditties, and was written and composed by himself. Here are the first verse and a couple of choruses:

" In a house, in a square, in a quadrant,
In a street, in a lane, in a road;
Turn to the left, on the right hand
You see there my true love's abode.
I go there a-courting and cooing,
To my love like a dove,
And swearing on my bended knees
If ever I cease to love,
May sheeps' heads grow on apple-trees
If ever I cease to love.

Chorus—If ever I cease to love,
If ever I cease to love,
May the moon be turned into green cheese,
If ever I cease to love.

If ever I cease to love,
If ever I cease to love,
May little dogs wag their tails in front
If ever I cease to love."

Leybourne died in September, 1884.

But the first " swell comique " of the old-time halls was Alfred Vance, " the Great Vance,"—most music-hall comedians were " great " in those days.

Immaculate in dress and deportment, he was the Beau Brummell of the halls, and had the distinction of visiting Marlborough House and eating with Edward VII, when Prince of Wales, whose friendship he enjoyed, and in receiving this distinction preceded Sir Henry Irving and J. L. Toole.

One of Vance's little mannerisms was that of carrying in his pockets a quantity of pocket handkerchiefs which, during the singing of a song, he would throw grandiloquently one by one on the stage—whence, his turn over, they were most carefully retrieved, and returned to him for the next show.

Vance's most popular song, of course, was " Slap Bang! " and it is the best remembered. Here are the first verse and chorus:

" The world is full of merry dogs,
And merry all should be;
For care the mind it only clogs,
And makes your pleasures flee.

And we mean to be merry oh!
So merry oh! All merry oh!
And always will be merry oh!
Rare merry dogs are we.

Chorus—Tra la la, tra la la,
Tra la la, tra la la,
Tra la la, tra la la,
Tral lal the ral lal the ral lal li do,
Slap bang, here we are again,
Here we are again, here we are again,
Slap bang, here we are again,
Rare merry dogs are we."

The words are not remarkable for their literary merit, which may account for the success of the ditty, for most of the renowned " gems " of the halls were of the most unsophisticated and elementary order of composition. The " catchy " tune was the vital element of success.

Vance was a versatile performer. Besides being the swell par excellence, he was a fine coster comedian, the first coster comedian, in fact, of the halls. He sang, too, and made a big success with, at least one yokel number called " A Country Life for Me; or, The Squire's Son." This song was also known as " Vance's Yorkshire Chap," and, when he would, besides being a comic lion, Vance could give with perfect ease all the delicate touches, affectation, and finesse necessary for the successful delineation of a " comic lioness." His song," Dolly Varden," in which the artiste made up to represent a girl of the period, was a triumph. This was in the last century's early 'seventies, and although " Dolly Varden," according to Vance, had nothing Dickensian about her, except in name, the singer faithfully represented the girl of the hour, and portrayed the " Grecian bend," and wore the huge plaited chignon popular at the time, underneath a pork-pie hat.

This is the chorus of the song:

" Dolly Varden, Dolly Varden,
Dolly Varden of the age;
Dolly Varden, Dolly Varden,
Dolly Varden's all the rage."

Another song of the 'seventies sung by Vance was "Have You Seen the Shah?"—written in celebration of the Shah's visit to London:

"Have you seen the Shah?
Oh, have you seen the Shah?
With five-pound notes
He lines his coats,
Which is peculiah!"

The chorus of "Vance's Yorkshire Chap," which song was written and composed by Vance himself, and which I have mentioned above, went thus:

"I'm the Squire's son and I'm fond of fun,
I'm happy and free and envy none;
Wherever I be,
Oh, a country life for me!"

"Be Always Up and Doing, Boys!" was another popular Vance number. It was written by R. Harrison and composed by D. G. Day, now David Day, of Francis, Day and Hunter:

"Let's be up and doing, boys,
Always up and doing;
'Forget, forgive' your motto be,
Always up and doing."

And here are the choruses of some other of Vance's best known songs.

"Old Brown's daughter's a proper sort of girl,
Old Brown's daughter's as fair as any pearl,
I wish I was the Lord Mayor, a Marquis or an Earl,
I'm blowed if I wouldn't marry Old Brown's girl."

"Quite *au fait*, quite *au fait*,
That's my style in every way;
Quite *au fait*, quite *au fait*,
Whate'er I do, it's quite *au fait*."

"Come and have a dance and your mother won't know,
Your mother won't know, your mother won't know;
Come and have a dance and your mother won't know,
No, your mother won't know, won't know."

The following chorus alluded to the aesthetic vogue Gilbert satirised in "Patience":

"She's utterly utter, consummate, too too,
And feeds on the lily and old china blue;
And with a sun-flower
She'll sit for an hour,
She's utterly utter, consummate, too too."

"I'm a chickaleary bloke, with my one, two, three,
Whitechapel was the village I was born in;
For to get me on the hop, or on my tibby drop,
You must wake up very early in the morning."

"On the Parade, on the Parade,
I 'do' the Parade, 'midst the beauties arrayed
On the Parade, yaas, on the Parade,
You may have all the town, but give me the Parade."

"The ballet was really entrancing,
The beautiful girls were all there;
My Carrie was belle of the dancing,
The girl with the golden hair."

"Cherries so red, strawberries so ripe,
At home, of course, they'll be storming;
Never mind the abuse, you have the excuse,
You went to Covent Garden in the morning."

"I bought her a carriage and pair
To ride out in the morning;
I met her in Leicester Square
Along with the girls so gay.
She went away a week to-day
Without the slightest warning.
And now she's gone and got married to my coachman."

And here is a bad prophecy:

"When the pigs begin to fly
Oh, won't the pork be high!
They are the most unlikely birds that ever flew the sky.

I see no reason why
We should not have a try:
We'll send the women to Parliament when the pigs begin to fly."

"Walking in the Zoo, walking in the Zoo,
The O.K. game on Sunday is walking in the Zoo,
Walking in the Zoo, walking in the Zoo,
The O.K. game on Sunday is walking in the Zoo!"

"Walking in the Zoo" was written by Hugh Willoughby Sweeny, an amusing and clever Irishman, who was a special correspondent during the Paris Exhibition of '78, and later on the staff of *Society*. One foggy morning he was picked up on the road to Chelsea, battered about the head, and dead, with half-a-sovereign in his mouth and empty pockets. It was believed that he had been attacked by hooligans on his way home and had put the half-sovereign in his mouth for safety.

"Come to your Martha, come, come, come,
The water is warm in the sun, sun, sun;
Don't shiver dear, there's nought to fear,
But come to your Martha, come."

"Taking my ease, taking my ease,
Doing whatever I happen to please;
Taking my ease, taking my ease,
Taking things easy, boys, taking my ease."

Vance's "Clicquot" was written to rival Leybourne's "Champagne Charlie." The words were by Frank W. Green, and the music by J. Riviere. The song had a fine rousing chorus, which is occasionally sung to this day:

"Clicquot! Clicquot! That's the stuff to make you jolly.
Clicquot! Clicquot! Soon will banish melancholy,
Clicquot! Clicquot! Drinking other wine is folly,
Clicquot! Clicquot! That's tho drink for me."

"Pretty Jemima, Don't Say No!" was another capital song of Vance's, and F. C. Burnand introduced it into his burlesque

of "Black-Eyed Susan," produced at the Royalty Theatre on November 29th, 1866. Burnand's chorus went:

"Pretty Seeusan, don't say no,
Don't say no. Ohio!
Pretty Seeusan, don't say no;
Answer, we'll married be."

Vance died on Boxing-night, 1888, in the wings of the Sun Music Hall, Knightsbridge, immediately on leaving the stage after singing his song "Is He Guilty?"

Arthur Lloyd was the last of the lions comique. Like many other men who became famous as comic singers—Vance, Macdermott, James Fawn, Charles Godfrey, to name no others—he commenced his professional career as an actor on the legitimate stage, following in the footsteps of his father, a Scottish comedian.

Young Lloyd first found his *métier* while acting in stock companies, when he would do a "turn" as a comic singer between the various pieces that went to make up the night's performance. So well did he succeed that he forsook the dramatic boards, and the comparatively small salary he could command as an actor, for the golden harvests in the more prolific fields of Variety.

Arthur Lloyd obtained his first engagement as a comic singer in the last century's early 'sixties at an old music-hall in Glasgow called the Whitebait. W. G. Ross, who afterwards became famous as the singer of that ribald ditty "Sam Hall," also used to appear there.

But Lloyd's real commencement to ascend the ladder of fame dates from his appearance—also in the early 'sixties—at the old Philharmonic Music Hall, Islington, which later became the Grand Theatre, run by Charles Wilmot, and is now the Islington Empire. Migrating westward he appeared at the London Pavilion, then under the management of Loibl and Sonnhammer.

The "Pav." in those days was little better than a "sing-song," admission being obtained by the purchase of a "refreshment" ticket, which, besides admitting you to witness the performance, entitled you to a drink. This custom was in force as late as the middle eighties, notably at Gatti's, the Hungerford Hall in Villiers Street, and at many minor music halls, such as

the Seabright, off the Hackney Road, and the Victor, Old Ford Road, two halls where many variety artistes whose names subsequently became household words first tried their 'prentice hands. Admission by "refreshment ticket," too, was in force at this time at the Griffin Music Hall, Shoreditch, afterwards the London, now the Shoreditch Empire.

Arthur Lloyd became a star at the London Pavilion, and the London Pavilion became a music-hall proper, discarding the "refreshment ticket," and charging for admission, largely in consequence of Lloyd's success. About this time, Lloyd was singing "The Sugar Shop," which was written and composed by G. W. Hunt:

"Oh, my! She lodges at a sugar shop,
Oh, dear! I reckon I'm in luck!
My eye! She's sweeter than a lollipop!
I'm so fond of Sally for she's such a little duck!"

And another song of Lloyd's at this period, by the same author and composer, was "The Organ Grinder":

"So I mourns for the loss of the girl I love,
And I don't know where to find her;
She has gone away from her turtle-dove,
With a nasty organ-grinder."

But Lloyd wrote most of his biggest successes himself. He had a facile pen for the humorous lyric, and could also compose a good melody to his own words. "Not for Joe," written and composed by him, was a very popular song about 1865. Arthur Lloyd got the idea for his song from a 'bus driver named Joe Baxter, with whom he used occasionally to travel. Joe Baxter had a pleasant way of refusing that which he did not require by remarking cheerfully: "No thank yer; not for Joe!"

This was Lloyd's chorus—and the song, it is said, sold to the tune of a hundred thousand copies:

"Not for Joe!
Not for Joe!
Not for Joseph,
If he knows it!
Not for Joe!
Not for Joe!
Not for Joseph,
Oh, dear, no!"

Another early song of Lloyd's was "I Vow'd that I Never Would Leave Her." Here are the first verse and chorus:

"Please to look on this warrior bold,
Pray behold; I've been sold.
And I'm sure when my story I've told,
Badly treated I've been, you'll say.
By a girl who was called Susan Jane,
Susan Jane was her name,
But I hope I'll ne'er see her again,
Tootle tum, tootle tum tay!"

Chorus—"Though I vow'd that I never would leave her,
She turned out a cruel deceiver,
Tootle tum, tootle tum,
Tootle tum, tootle tum,
Tootle tum, tootle tum tay!"

It has been computed that Lloyd wrote and composed something like two hundred songs for himself. Here are some of his best known choruses from songs written by himself:

"C, O, N, with a Con,
With a S, T, A, N, with a stan,
With a Con-stan, T, I, ti,
With a Con-stan-ti—
N, O, no, with a no,
With a Con-stan-ti-no,
P, L, E, with a pull,
Constantinople."

"Ladida, ladidoo, fighting, slaughtering, my trade is,
No doubt you have all heard of Captain Ladidadidoo.
Ladida, Ladidoo, I'm the pet of all the ladies,
The darlings like to flirt with Captain Ladidadidoo."

"Pretty lips sweeter than cherry or plum,
Always look smiling and never look glum,
Seem to say 'Come away, kissie, come, come,
Yummy-yum, yummy-yum, yum, yum, yum!'"

"Just by the Angel at Islington,
Close by the clock that always is wrong;
There many 'Favourite' 'buses stop,
Opposite Marshall's cigar and baccy shop;

Where a fellow can get, without any joke,
A weed I'll be bound he'll be able to smoke,
Just by the Angel,
Just by the Angel,
Just by the Angel at Islington."

"Cruel Mary Holder
Says she'll only wed a soldier,
Oh, I often used to scold her;
Sure's my name was Joseph Molder,
I would go and be a soldier,
And return a great deal bolder
For to marry she."

"'Chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck,'
Said pretty little Mary, light as a canary;
'Chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck,
As she called her chickens all around her."

"She said at Her Majesty's Theatre,
There was the man of her choice,
Signor MacStinger, a barytone singer,
With such a magnificent voice.
I tried with my voice to enchant her,
Tra, la, la, la, la, la, la,
But she said 'It won't fizz, yours is nothing like his,'
Tra, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la!"

"I loved her and she might have been
The happiest in the land;
But she fancied a foreigner who played a flageolet
In the middle of a German band."

"Diddle, diddle, dumpling, my son John,
He went to bed with his trousers on,
One leg off and the other leg on,
Diddle, diddle, dumpling, my son John."

"Pardonnez-moi, pardonnez-moi, pardonnez-moi, monsieur!
Me no speak English vell, and you no Francais parlez-vous;
An' zen I am a stranger here, your customs never saw,
I did not know 'down on ze nail,' monsieur, pardonnez-moi."

The following choruses are from songs written for Lloyd by others:

"Good-bye, John, now don't stop long,
But come back soon to your own chickabiddy,
For my heart beats so, when the winds do blow
That take away my sailor."

"For I like to be a swell,
To walk along Pall Mall;
Or anywhere, I don't much care,
So I can be a swell."

"I've been a bright star in my time,
Though now I'm reduced to a seedy 'un;
In me you may please to behold
Junius Brown, the tragedian."

"Ordered here, and wanted there,
And always in hot water,
I'd like to know who leads a life
Like Bill, the railway porter."

"I'll place it in the hands of my solicitor,
I'll have this thing put right;
I'll spend my money, oh, ain't it funny
How money makes the lawyers fight?"

"In the Mail train to the North, let it rain, hail or snow,
Along the iron railway like lighning on we go;
I care not for the weather, and my brake I'll not discard,
For as happy as a king am I, although a railway guard."

"Never mind me, I can't see,
Don't mind me for I'm not looking.
Never mind me, I can't see,
Don't mind me, for I won't look."

Here are a couple of choruses from Lloyd's popular song "The Putney 'Bus":

"I went after, she sped along,
Tra, la, la, la, la!
Tra, la, la, la, la!
And I gaily murmured my song,
Tra, la, la, la, la!
Let me save you, miss, from the throng—
Tra, la, la, la, la, la!"

"Off I went again like a shot,
Tra, la, la, la, la!
Tra, la, la, la, la!
In ten minutes was a mile from the spot,
Tra, la, la, la, la!
Never stopped once till home I got,
Tra, la, la, la, la, la!"

Like Vance, Lloyd received the distinction—as also did Jolly John Nash—of being summoned to entertain at a private party whose guests included H.R.H. Albert Edward, Prince of Wales.

Macdermott—"The Great Macdermott"—had been a sailor in the Royal Navy before he took to the stage.

He started with George Conquest at the Grecian, and while there met Harry Pettitt, later to collaborate with George R. Sims and to achieve fame as a playwright, who wrote him the song which launched him on his career, "The Scamp," with its refrain:

"From Orton to Odger,
From Dan to Sir Roger,
They can't hold a candle to me."

Arthur Orton was, of course, the Tichborne Claimant, and Odger was a political cobbler of the period. The success of this song sent Macdermott to the halls, where he followed it up with a ditty recording what Moses said to Aaron (or vice-versa) while sitting on a rock. This, I believe, was written by Charles Townly, the Islington Registrar, who wrote songs and pantomimes under the name of Geoffrey Thorne.

Here are a verse and chorus of "The Scamp":

"I flatter myself I'm a rogue,
And candidly own I'm a cad.
A rogue, a thief, a vagabond,
And everything that's bad,

To my father and mother I proved
A sorrow, a ban and a curse.
And every year I continued by
Getting from awful to worse.

For if ever there was a damned scamp
I flatter myself I am he:
From Cain to Sir Roger
From Brigham to Odger
They can't hold a candle to me!"

Odger's son took up the cudgels on behalf of his father. He, with some apparent reason, objected to his father being proclaimed a scamp several times nightly, and one night at the Pavilion he caused a scene which ended in the police court. The magistrates sided with the outraged son, and decided that the singer had provoked the disturbance. So the chorus was altered to:

"From William the Norman
To Brigham the Mormon
They can't hold a candle to me!"

The "Great" Macdermott's song: "We don't want to fight, but by jingo if we do!" is even now well known, and it is curious how few people are cognisant of the fact that the terms "jingo" and "jingoism" have their origin here. The excitement in England during and after the Russo-Turkish war—when England and Russia once more nearly came to blows—was terrific, and the audience used to rise and sing the chorus with immense gusto. I was once told by a man who vowed that he had seen him there, that Monty Corri, Dizzy's secretary, attended at the wings periodically, by his wily old chief's orders, to see how the song was received, and to report on the public feeling.

Other of Macdermott's famous choruses were:

"Such a nice little cosy cigar divan,
A Piccadilly cigar divan.
All the mashers, and dashers, and tralala slashers
All know Milly's cigar divan."

"So long as the world goes round,
So long as the world goes round,
They powder their noses and tread on their toeses
So long as the world goes round."

"Up went the captain, up went the crew,
The first mate, the second mate, and little middies too!
Up went the boatswain, and swore his love was true,
But she couldn't marry all, so what *was* the girl to do?"

Robert Louis Stevenson quoted this effort in "The Ebb Tide":

"Up in a balloon, boys, up in a balloon,
All among the little stars, sailing round the moon.
Up in a balloon, boys, up in a balloon;
It's something awfully jolly to be up in a balloon!"

"'Au revoir, ta-ta!' you'll hear him say
To the pretty girls in Rotten Row upon a summer's day.
I'll strike you with a feather, I'll stab you with a rose!
For the pet of all the ladies is Hildebrand Montrose!"

"My father is a barber and he is unkind to me,
And I'd be glad if my old dad would go to Barbary,
I'd rather lather father;—with that he don't agree;
Yes, I'd rather lather father than father lathered me."

In different vein:

"If we could only look ahead in journeying through Life
What accidents of flood and field 'twould save us in this strife,
The Railway has its signal lights, and so in Life have we,
They only want attention, and no danger there would be."

Chorus—"For the White Light's all right; go ahead in safety.
The Green Light seems right, to caution us in time.
The Red Light shows bright, brings us up right hasty;
For when we see the Red we know—There's Danger on the Line."

The following words seem to have a present-day application:

" If you were a tailor or hard-working snob
And honestly earned half-a-quid for a job
Would you be contented with only nine bob ?
Not much ! Not *what?* Not much ! "

Chorus—" But it's better than nothing at all !—Not much !
Not better than nothing at all ?—Not much !
Nine bob out of ten, to hard-working men
Is better than nothing at all ?—Not much ! "

" Round the ring she used to go,
Like an arrow from a bow—
Houp-la, Houp-la, Houp-la-lay !
You should hear me cry ' Encore ! '
She's the girl that I adore.
Houp-la, Houp-la, Houp-la-lay ! "

" With a rat-tat-tat he knocks at the door.
Up goes the sash on the second floor ;
He pulls out his book, and says with a grin :
' I say, Mrs M., is the guv-nor in ? ' "

" Mind the paint ! Mind the paint !
It won't be dry for weeks.
Was it the paint on the door they meant,
Or the paint on the pretty girl's cheeks ?
Certainly not, certainly not,
She looked just like a saint,
Wherever you go, take care, you know,
Be sure and mind the paint ! "

Had Sir Arthur Pinero, by any chance, that last chorus in mind when he wrote " The Mind the Paint Girl " ?

Another Macdermott favourite was :

" Jeremiah, poke the fire, puff, puff, puff !
Jeremiah, poke the fire, puff, puff, puff !
First poke it very gently, then poke it very rough :
Jeremiah, poke the fire, puff, puff, puff ! "

And then, of course, there was the great Macdermott furore : " Charlie Dilke upset the milk."

The Dilke divorce case was the sensation of the period, and there is no need at this date to rake up the unsavoury details, which were the talk of the town. Sir Charles Dilke had been one of the most promising Liberal politicians, had won his way from a seat below the gangway to the Treasury Bench, and had obtained a seat in the Cabinet. He was held in high public and private esteem, when Mr Crauford cited him before the Divorce Court. The unco' guid were horrified, and when the Fanny episode was introduced a prominent Minister declared piously:

"Thank God, the Liberal party does not need the support of such immoral men!"

Sir Charles, at any rate, took his gruel like a man. Of course, the Gladstone Government was shaken by the disclosures; Macdermott did not miss the opportunity, and the chorus of his song became known all over the world.

Here is the original chorus, as turned out by the author:

"Master Dilke upset the milk
Taking it home to Chelsea.
The papers say that Charlie's gay,
Rather a wilful wag.
This noble representative
Of everything good in Chelsea
Has let the cat, the naughty cat,
Right out of the Gladstone bag."

"Master" Dilke after a few nights became "Charlie" Dilke, and how the town—and then the country—took it up! It was howled everywhere. There were "Charlie Dilke" nights at Romano's, and there was not a smoking concert at which it was not chanted. It even appeared in "foreign" languages. Here are a few examples:

In French—

"Maitre Dilke a renversé le lait
En l'apportant de Chelsea.
Les journeaux disent que Charlie est gai
Tant soit peu farceur.
Ce noble représentant
De tout ce qui est bon à Chelsea
A fait sortir le chat,
Le méchant chat,
Du Gladstone sac."

In Petticoat Lane slang, by Pitcher—

"Master Dilke he felere the koloof
Bringing it keiler from Chelsea.
The papers say that Charlie's chutspa
Rather a ruaching nar,
This froomkeit representative
Of ev'rything shermi in Chelsea,
Has let the cat, the lotof cat,
Get out of the Gladstone barthe."

In Latin hendecasyllables—

"Effudit Carolus domum reportans
Lac Dilkus media procax Suburra
Hunc salsum putat, urbs virum, et facetum,
Eheu! nobilis hic patronus omnis
Quodcunque est mediae boni Suburrae
Felem perdidit, improbam, ece felem,
Grandaevis loculis diu retentam."

In Chinese—

"Challey Dilluk have makee upset milluk
What time he takee Chelsea side,
Allo paper talkee he too muchee gay
Welly melly gentleman.
This Number 1 piecee Chelsea mandarin
What, my thinkee, belong welly good.
Have lettee that welly wicked cat
Walkee chop-chop outside
Olo man Gladstone bag."

Versions in every known language poured into the old "Pink 'Un"—in Dutch, in Danish, in Greek, in very special Scotch, in Hindu, in Esquimaux, in Egyptian—and the glamour of the old chorus apparently still attracts, for, six or eight years ago, when it was the subject of a correspondence in *Town Topics*, Mr Augustus John wrote:

"Why in your polyglot versions of that exquisite lyric, 'Charlie Dilke,' is not included the ancient 'Egypte speeche'? I beg to supply the omission.

" In Welsh Roman—

" Rai Dilke, mukdas te pel o tud,
Kano rigerelas les keri ko Chelsea;
O patrina penem, te salimaskro'ca, Charley.
Bars dosta minjengeo si-lo!
Kav'akai raikano rokengro,
Sar kuskibenesta 're Chelsea,
Mukdas o maoka, o nijox maoka,
Avrï o baxtalo pelesto gonestar! "

The only other songs that ever had similar honours bestowed in them were those of that youthful veteran, Charles Coborn, " Two Lovely Black Eyes " and " The Man That Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo."

All the stars scintillated—I believe that is the crusted phrase—at the old Pavilion. In its most successful days, under Swanborough's management, Marie Lloyd, Marie Loftus, Harriet Vernon, Charles Godfrey, Cinquevalli, Charles Coborn—the ever young—Dan Leno, Little Tich, Albert Chevalier, Gus Elen, R. G. Knowles, all made reputations and money. Later on it became one of the Syndicate halls, and Frank Glenister carried on the tradition.

And, latest of all, Mr Cochran rebuilt it as the present beautiful theatre on probably the finest site in the world.

XIX

THE OLD ORDER

The Middlesex—The Last of the Chairmen—Sam Collins's—Knowles of the Cambridge Music Hall—" Bob " Courtney—The South London—The Chairman's Song—The Royal, Holborn—Harry Cavendish—The Tivoli—A Disastrous Start—The Syndicate Halls—Charles Morton—Mark Hambourg and Harry Lauder—Edouard de Reszke and Harry Fragson—The Goudie Bank Frauds——Mr. F. E. Smith—The Last Performance—Tom Thorne—The Old Order Changing—Great Artistes—The Old Choruses—Music Hall " Classics "—" Pink 'Un " Songwriters—Personality.

WHEN one speaks nowadays of a " music-hall chairman," one visualises a Stoll or a Butt, and associates him with a board of directors, and the control of a syndicate of halls and hippodromes. In the old days, the chairman was the employed, not the employer. He was the link between the tavern sing-song and the variety palaces of to-day.

At the Middlesex Music Hall, in Drury Lane, the last of the chairmen was to be found, and old " pro's " still tell stories of Harry Fox, who presided for many years at that hall when it was known as the Mogul—or the " Old Mo."

Then there was John Read, chairman of Sam Collins's, a handsome, dark man, resplendent in white shirt front, with colossal diamond stud. He was a song writer, as well as singer, and would often leave the chair to do a turn on the stage. The chorus of one song, of which he was author, ran :

> " Aren't they pretty, aren't they nice ?
> Don't you think they're cheap at the price ?
> At every blessed shop Maria she must stop
> And ask me to buy her what she fancies."

Pitcher at one time lived in Canonbury, and would take in Sam Collins's on his way home, and often have I heard him describe its glories and cockney humour in his own dry, inimitable way.

Another famous chairman was Knowles, of the Cambridge Music Hall, who was never known to refuse a drink, but, whatever quantity he took, it had no apparent effect on him. Sometimes when he announced a turn, the gallery would bawl "Who?"

Then it was a sight for the "gods" to see Knowles assume his mantle of dignity. He would sweep the house with his eyes until he found the spot whence the voices had come, and then, in stentorian tones:

"You heard!" he would reply.

But the typical chairman of the day was Robert Courtney, of the South London, known as "Baron" or "Bob." He was a great dandy. Big, broad-shouldered, he always wore a glossy, curly-brimmed top-hat tilted at a knowing angle, and an astrakhan-collared ulster of a howling pattern. When they were doffed, "Bob" stood revealed in "immaculate evening dress," a diamond in his shirt front the size of a glass stopper—had "Bob's" diamonds been real, tens of thousands of pounds could not have bought them—dark, curly hair, and a dark moustache, trimmed in the fashion of the day.

He knew how to control his "gods." One tap with his hammer, and—"Boys! Boys!"—and the gallery subsided.

It was not unusual for the chairman to oblige with a song, and the "Baron" had a song with which he would often commence the evening—the first "turn" never hurried in those halcyon days, but nobody worried about *that*. At the old South, whenever there was a hitch, "Bob" would sing his song. He must have sung it hundreds upon hundreds of times. It was called "Britannia's Voice of Thunder"; the "Baron" would advance to the footlights with his music in his hand, the orchestra would play a bar or two of introduction, and then Bob led off amid deafening applause with:

"When we hear Britainnia's voice of thunder!"

Though one gathered that his song was patriotic, no one ever heard any more words than the first line, for the simple reason that the big drum and bass obliggato drowned the rest of the song up to the conclusion—to say nothing of the fact that the gallery boys kept up throughout an incessant fire of:

"Good old Bob! Bob! Bob! Bob!"

And now, as I write, the famous old South London has fallen a victim to the all-conquering "pictures." It has thus followed the example of its old rival in the affections of South London—

the Canterbury, Westminster Bridge Road. The " South "—to use the familiar title—has had many noted proprietors, including Macdermott, Mr Adney Payne, and Mrs Posh, and was one of the last halls to retain the " chairman " in control of the programme, Bob Courtney having been the final occupant of that office. Most of the old-time " stars " appeared at the " South "; among them Leybourne, Lloyd, Vance, T. W. Barrett, E. W. Mackney, and Lieutenant Cole, the original ventriloquist.

At one time, the Royal, Holborn, was the great rival of the Pavilion, and the Royal's chairman in '77 was Harry Cavendish, who afterwards went on to the Pavilion. No. 1 on the programme, which lies before me, is " Mr Harry Cavendish, Buffo Vocalist," showing that it was the custom for the chairman to open the entertainment. Cavendish had a handsome presence, a large, fair moustache and a stentorian voice.

When asked what he would drink, he would be very accommodating. Passing the wine-card, he would boom :

" Anything there, dear boy ; anything there ! "

At the Royal, champagne was the favourite drink, and Leybourne's " Champagne Charley " and " Rollicking Rams " were favourite songs.

In later days, of the three West End Halls, the Pavilion, the Oxford and the Tivoli, the Pavilion was perhaps the most representative of the type, although the programmes at all were much alike, and the same artists appeared.

It is a curious fact that in the days of late nights the Tivoli Saturday afternoons were the big gatherings of the week, for at the matinees there met regularly many little coteries of Bohemians, representative of the Stage, the Bar, the Home Office, the " Ring," and the " Fancy," to whom the Strand Hall was the invariable Saturday afternoon meeting-place.

The site of the Tivoli was originally a restaurant—at which Lager beer was a speciality, and, at that time, a novelty—belonging to two Dutch brothers named Hurter. When the Strand lost its only music-hall by the conversion of the old Strand Music Hall into John Hollingshead's Gaiety Theatre, and, as the only music-hall between Holborn and Westminster was Weston's—now the Holborn Empire—the success of the new hall in what was then the heart of theatre-land seemed a foregone conclusion.

The Pavilion was under a cloud—after the Metropolitan

Board of Works scandal—and a group of people interested, which included Edward Terry, "Mons" Marius, H. J. Leslie (then in the first flush of his "Dorothy" fortunes), Charles Coote, proprietor of Hopwood and Crew, the music publishers, induced the Hurters to promote the scheme from which emerged the Tivoli Music Hall.

Everything seemed to promise well, and the inaugural luncheon in the restaurant on the premises, held under the presidency of Willie Wilde—"Wuffalo Will," Oscar Wilde's brilliant brother—was a triumphant success. But there the success ended, for a time. The directors were all "amateurs" knowing nothing of "variety" business, and were soon up to their necks in litigation with the Pavilion-Oxford Syndicate, which had the first "call" on all the best artists, and which was perpetually injuncting the new concern.

Then came the bankruptcy court, a re-modelling and a new directorate, drawn from the ranks of the Pavilion-Oxford Syndicate, plus that astute music-hall manager, George Adney Payne, of the Canterbury and South London. And then the Tivoli prospered. The Syndicate Halls, as they were called, were in a very strong position, and contracts for long terms of years made with stars such as Marie Lloyd, Harry Lauder, Little Tich and Wilkie Bard gave them additional importance.

The veteran Charles Morton, being told by the then autocrat of the Alhambra, Harry Sutton, that at sixty he was too old for his job, was snapped up by the Tivoli people, and for years the old gentleman's mutton-chop whiskers were a Strand fixture, until the day when Alfred Beyfus, on behalf of his brother-in-law, Count Hollander, the Palace chairman, secured the Alhambra "cast-off" for the big Cambridge Circus Theatre, to replace Augustus Harris.

At the Palace, for a time, Morton found much the same trouble that had existed in the early Tivoli days in the way of barred artistes, but the Palace surmounted its difficulties and ultimately under the Butt regime attained a prestige peculiarly its own.

Some big reputations were made at the little Tivoli, and as one turns over old programmes one finds name after name famous in music-hall history, such as Ada Reeve, who made her first success there, singing "What do I care?"; Fanny Lester; Dan Leno, in his waiter song, written by the now Sir Walter de Frece, of Parliamentary and Tilley fame; Marie Lloyd; Will

Evans—with his rush on to the stage and his "Good evening, Mr Asher!" to the musical director; the inimitable Harry Fragson and Harry Lauder.

It was at the Tivoli that a writing man had the experience of introducing two famous people to one another, Mark Hambourg and Sir (then plain Mr) Harry Lauder. It was the first time the great musician had heard the Scotch comedian, and, with the generous enthusiasm which characterises him, he told Lauder the pleasure his art and performance had given him, adding whimsically:

"I am only a poor pianist myself, but I can appreciate, etc., etc."

Lauder listened solemnly, and when Hambourg had finished, took him by the hand:

"Ah, well," he said kindly, "per-r-rseve-rre, young man. Stick to it, an' worrrk—whatever it is—an' some day, mebbe, you'll be famous yoursel'."

And Mark was more genuinely delighted with him than ever.

The same writing-man took another famous musician for his first visit to the Tivoli—Edouard de Reszke. Poor Harry Fragson came on, and when the show was over, de Reszke and his escort went across to Romano's for supper. As the writer stood for a moment in the passage, Fragson came in and saw him.

"Who was that sitting with you to-night?" he asked excitedly.

"Edouard de Reszke."

"I thought it must be!" cried Fragson. "But I couldn't believe it was Edouard de Reszke in the Tivoli!"

There was no more modest man than Fragson; to him grand opera was as Olympus, and Edouard de Reszke one of the highest gods. For a long time he was diffident about accepting an invitation to supper, but was at last persuaded, and when M. Edouard appeared he was introduced, and they sat down together. That night the writing man heard of more operas, grand, light and comic, than he had ever dreamed to have been composed. De Reszke knew them all—so did Fragson—and each hummed or quoted from every one of them.

That night was the beginning of a lasting friendship between the opera-singer and the music-hall artiste. Not many nights later, Fragson and his introducer were invited to spend the evening at de Reszke's house to discuss the operas in more

favourable circumstances. On that night, de Reszke sang *all* the time, and afterwards, when they were both in London, scarcely a week passed that Fragson did not go to de Reszke's house.

The Tivoli figured as the setting for one of the scenes of the Goudie Bank Frauds. One Saturday a sporting habitué asked the manager if, as a favour, he would keep a little parcel in his safe until Monday. Monday came, and, instead of the sporting habitué, a gentleman from Scotland Yard called for the packet. Then there were arrests; Goudie and a pugilist went to gaol, and a Jew bolted, and was said to have fallen overboard from a Channel steamer.

"D'you really think he fell overboard?" Pitcher asked a C.I.D. man one evening we were in the Tivoli together.

"Mr Binstead," said the detective solemnly, "I give you my oath that if I really thought he'd jumped into the sea I'd—I'd bait every yard of the Channel with fried fish!"

The Goudie case was responsible for much.

When the trial of the wretched bank-clerk from the Orkneys came on, at the Liverpool Assizes, a solicitor was told by the judge to instruct a barrister to defend the prisoner, and one was instructed.

He made a brilliant defence of a hopeless case—the sort of case in which it is impossible to fail wholly, as the result is a certainty, but from which much advertisement may be gained by a good showing—and the young barrister, F. E. Smith by name, made an excellent showing.

Not long after, Lord Mersey, then Mr Justice Bigham, on a visit of assize, was strolling through the streets of Liverpool with his marshal. They came upon a huge insurance building in course of erection.

"What is that building?" asked the judge.

"The new State Insurance Offices, I believe," replied the marshal.

"Ah," purred Mr Justice Bigham, in the soft fastidious voice once so familiar to the Bar—"I thought that it was perhaps Mr Frederick Smith's new set of chambers."

But by the time the Tivoli had got into its stride, the music-hall world was in the throes of change. The Palace was drawing all Society, with the big "S," and those who love to follow Society; the Coliseum was beginning to draw the multitude, and the long contract system made novelties difficult. Another

era of law-suits set in over the " dramatic sketch " question and the old form of entertainment was losing popularity.

At the close of the last performance at the Tivoli brav speeches were made from the stage, everybody drank to speedy resurrection, but one felt somehow that the old orde had changed—whether for good or not is another matter.

My most vivid recollection of that evening, which saw th passing of the old order, is of poor old Tom Thorne, of " Ou Boys " and a hundred other successes, then a pensioner, wh had the entrée, sitting at one of the little tables at the back o the circle. On the table was a large carafe of water, and obviously thinking himself unobserved, he drew from his pocke a handkerchief, swiftly poured a little water on it, and pro ceeded to draw the moistened rag over his uncleaned boots The lace of one boot was a piece of string.

The old order had faded.

And here is a last memory of the old Tivoli :

The war had started and a squad of dejected absentees wa being marched under an escort Charing Cross-ward. One, typical cockney, cocked a sad eye in the direction of the yawn ing gap which marked a familiar Strand site.

" Blime ! " he muttered, " I always said something wa bound to 'appen when they started pullin' the old Tivol dahn ! "

The closing of the Tivoli, like the closing of Romano's bar was the visible end of a phase that had been gradually dyin for some time. That unknown quantity, public taste, had bee slowly changing, and the old fare was no longer to its palate The lion comics, the serio-comics, the beautiful sisters, for th time being, at all events, were under an eclipse, and the wa and the " movies " have produced still greater revolutions an chaos, from which, presumably, the ideal " variety " entertain ment will emerge.

But it is a mistake on the part of those who never saw it i its prime to depreciate the old *régime*. It had its faults and it glaring absurdities, but it had also its merits, and it produce indubitably great artists—artists not in the mere music-hal slang meaning of the phrase—in such folk as Marie Lloyd Eugene Stratton, Dan Leno, Jenny Hill, Bessie Bellwood Cinquevalli—to mention only a haphazard half-dozen. Tha supreme artist, Albert Chevalier, was a product of the chang ing taste.

Of the literary and musical values of the songs which rank as classics in music-hall history at least this much can be said; they were neither better nor worse than the jazz effusions which have inundated us from across the Atlantic, and the words, if illiterate, had meaning, and, at times, even made some pretensions to a picture of the life known to the audience. It may be a matter of taste, but personally I prefer such simple nonsense as W. B. Fair used to sing:

"There's the fox, and the hare, and the badger and the hare,
And the birds in the greenwood tree;
And the pretty little rabbits, with their most engaging habits.
And they all have a mate but me!"

to all the coons who "warnt to go back, warnt to go back"—to Alabam, Dixie, Oshkosh, or Napoleonville, Pa.

Few, of course, of the old choruses have any striking literary merit—to put it mildly—but they supply an index to the tastes and opinions of the times, and, for that reason, I believe, are not wholly without interest.

The truth is, of course, that the real cause of the popularity of these songs was the tune. As a rule, the words are the merest drivel—there are exceptions, but very few—just as are the words of popular songs of more modern days; as far as the words are concerned there is nothing to choose between "The Same Old Game," which flourished in the 'Seventies, "Linger Longer Loo," which delighted the audiences in the 'Nineties, and "The Honeysuckle and the Bee," which attained a great vogue in the present century.

Long before the days of Vance and Leybourne, songs were sung which had a long life, and their memories endure at the present moment. "Buffler at Morning, and Buffler at Night" was sung all over England as long ago as 1760, and one can trace back for one hundred and fifty years or so patriotic songs, such as "Hearts of Oak," and "The British Grenadiers." There were no music-halls, in the accepted sense, when "As I was walking one Morning in May," "The Jolly Young Waterman," "High Randy-Dandy O," "Oh dear! What can the Matter Be?" "Paddy Whack," and "There was a Frog Lived in a Well" were as popular in their day as "Champagne Charley," or, to come to later dates, "Two Lovely Black Eyes" and "Knocked 'Em in the Old Kent Road."

No song can become popular unless it has two essentia features. First, the melody must be simple and " whistleable." The second essential is a similar simplicity in the words. I you analyse the choruses which have become almost traditional you will find that they consist of a few commonplace word often repeated, such as " Not for Joe ! " " Slap, Bang, Here w are again ! " or " Wot cher, Ria ? " Could anything be easie and simpler than :

" I wish I was with Nancy, I do, I do.
In a second floor, for evermore,
I'd live and die with Nancy.
In the Strand, in the Strand,
I wish I was with Nancy."

The tune associated with those words was catchy, and easil recalled when it was introduced into " The Better 'Ole " at th New Oxford, with the words " We wish we was in Blighty."

Other illustrations justifying my theory may be found in suc popular successes as " Ta-ra-ra-boomdeay ! " " Hi-tiddley-hi ti," " La-di-da," " Torrel-laddy," and all songs like " Tiddy fol-lol," or with a fol-de-rol refrain.

And no less an authority than Vesta Tilley would seem t confirm my views as to the essentials of the popular music-ha song.

" Of my own songs," she observed once, " I think those myself considered the best were ' Algy '—the Piccadilly Johnni with the little glass eye—which gave much scope for characte acting ; ' Following in Father's Footsteps,' a very jolly melod full of good ' lines ' ; and ' The Sad Sea Waves,' which had ' plot ' better than you get in most three-act musical comedie Of all music-hall songs in my time, perhaps ' Daisy Bell ' ' A Bicycle Made for Two,' with its simple catchy tune an easily learned chorus, caught the popular fancy more than an I can remember."

Some of the staff of the old " Pink 'Un " were associate with big popular music-hall successes. Bob Martin's " Ball hooley " and " Killaloe " are still remembered, while the la Sir Willoughby Maycock's (" The Murder Monger ") lines a still heard occasionally from the minstrels at Ascot and Goo wood :

" We're all getting older, older every day,
Older and bolder, so the people say.
Some are growing uglier, and others getting grey—
But we're all getting older every day."

One wonders whether, say, fifty years hence, the popular singers of to-day will be remembered, with lingering admiration for their trashy songs, and even affectionate regard, as are the favourites of fifty years ago.

There must have been some magnetic personality about the Vances and the Leybournes for them to have obtained their firm hold on the public. Moreover, there were in those days more stars in the music-hall firmament than we see to-day. Competition was vastly keener. In any one year of the 'Seventies there were on the list of London music-hall artistes at least 250 comic singers, the same number of serio-comics, forty Irish comic singers, and a couple of hundred of sentimental singers, and at least a hundred well-known duettists. And out of the assembly, at least fifty are still remembered with fervour.

XX

STARTING A PAPER

Corlett's Editorial Staff—The Regular Contributors—" Pink 'Un " Celebrities —Swears and a Syndicate—An Offer—John's Hint—The Sale of the " Pink 'Un "—de Wend Fenton—Dwarf Confronts his Proprietor—Pocketing £500 —A Piquant Situation—Pitcher's Grievance—The Last Day—John's ' Diplomacy "—The New Methods—A Mysterious Financier—The Wolf and the Lambs—A Week-end at Brighton—Harry Preston—" K. J."—What a Paper Costs—Starting a Paper—Finding a Title—Fate Strikes—War—Death of Pitcher—Edgard Wallace—Death of Dwarf—Death of Lennard—Death of Kennedy Jones—The Paper Sold.

DURING the last years of Corlett's proprietorship, the editorial staff, after the death of Edward Spencer, consisted of four only, who met regularly every Thursday to " put the paper to bed," and exercised editorial functions as well as contributing their own articles. Those four were Colonel Newnham-Davis, in Corlett's frequent absences editor-in-charge; Pitcher; Lennard, who when John was away took charge of the racing department, and myself. Towards the last, Dwarf and Pitcher were frequent absentees for reasons of health, and then Lennard took sole charge of the sporting side of the paper, whilst the conduct of the lighter side and of the theatres fell to my lot.

There were, of course, numerous contributors, many of whom had written for the paper for years, and whose work played no small part in the success of John's property, but towards the close, the editorial staff proper consisted of four only.

Amongst the regular contributors whose names were known to every " Pink 'Un " reader were A. R. Marshall, who, under his nom de plume " Doss Chiderdoss "—which, he once maintained to me was Romany for " Sleep, gentle Sleep "—contributed the front page poem regularly from the death of " Ballyhooley " Bob Martin; S. Dixon, " The British Yeoman," one of the best authorities living on the show ring, the farm and the field; E. Gideon, " Vieux Marcheur," whose connection with the paper terminated, however, some years before its sale Captain Banbury, " The Tramp," whose golf, cricket and fish-

ing articles were among the most popular features of the paper; James Henry Smith, "Jim the Penman"; William Howlett, a Dickens-like character for whose quaintly written and vividly "seen" Natural History and Angling Notes Lord Northcliffe had a profound admiration; "St. Giles," Twells Brex, who on the sale of the "Pink 'Un" joined the *Mail*, and did brilliant work for it up to the date of his untimely death; "Peggy," Meg Villars; "Jawkins, M.P.," Sir Carne Rasch, who for many years contributed a Parliamentary column, and "The New Broom," Alfred Allison.

Among the "Pink 'Un" celebrities who figured in, or contributed to the pink pages in their day were "Th' Gineral," Jack O'Shea; "Bobbos," Robert Williams, private secretary to Lord Rosebery; "Orange Blossom," Henry Smurthwaite; the Hon. Frank Lawley; W. H. Langley; Pitcher, wrote in early times under the name of "Morris the Mohel"; Shifter used innumerable names; Shirley Brooks was "Peter Blobbs"; and Newnham-Davis was originally "The Man Who Lived Next Door to Blobbs"; William Mackay was "Jim" and "The Live Lord"; and other personalities in the days of the paper's glory were "Noah Claypole," Neville Cooper, son of Sidney Cooper, R.A.; "Shakebacon, Jnr.," W. Sapte, junior; "The Distinguished Exile," Tom Reid; "The Member for Tattersalls," Allan M. Jeffry; "In Vino Veritas," William Burch; while amongst the many who figured weekly in Answers to Correspondents and were known to all readers were "Captain Evergreen," Arthur de Vere Smith; "Ole Brer Rabbit," Captain Fred Russell; "The Stage Damager," Charles Harris; "Father Jim," Jim Selby; "The Gasper," Arthur Roberts; "The Pipe of Port," Philip Cosens; "The Exhaust Pipe," John Barrow; "The Roman," Romano; "The Brown Mouse," and "Hunty," Miss Huntingford of Romano's; "Presto," Mr Harry Preston; "Sugar," Major Candy, whose daughter became Duchess of Newcastle; "Dickie the Driver," Walter Dickson; "Swish" Broadwood; "Hullo There!" Carlton Blyth; "Our Only Joy," Miss Phyllis Broughton; and a host of others, such as "Prayer," "The Windsor Wawwior," "Billie Fitzditto," "The Treasure," "The Skipper," "The McBuddha," "Phylloxera," remembered of the initiated.

But, as I have said, of all these there were in the last years of Corlett's *régime* four only of the editorial staff proper responsible for getting the paper out: "The Dwarf of Blood,"

Colonel Newnham-Davis; "Pitcher," Arthur Binstead; "Rooty Tooty," Horace Lennard, and "Costs," my humble self.

Some four years before the sale of the "Pink 'Un," Pitcher was approached by Swears on behalf of a syndicate, at the head of which was a well-known sporting nobleman, with a view to starting a new paper, to be under Binstead's editorship, and in which he was to have an interest. Pitcher told me of the offer.

"John is getting on," he said, "and no one knows what will become of the paper if anything happens to him. We are all growing older, and it's time we began to think of being something other than salaried members of an editorial staff. If I accept this offer, will you come in with me? If you do, I'll stipulate that you shall have an interest in the new rag."

I agreed. "But," I said, "we must first put the whole thing before Corlett, and let the old man know exactly what we propose to do."

"Of course," said Pitcher, and the matter was laid before John.

He listened seriously.

"I don't want to stand in the way of either of you," he said at length. "If you decide to start for yourselves you're at perfect liberty to do so, so far as I am concerned. But, bear this in mind, it's a very different thing starting a new paper these days to what it was when the *Sporting Times* was started. And don't forget that a position on the staff of the "Pink 'Un" gives you a certain standing. I don't mean to go on forever; sooner or later I shall retire, and then it would be far the best arrangement for everybody for the old paper to be carried on by the old staff. I shall be satisfied with some sort of income from it, and some payment for an interest in it."

The hint, if not exhaustively clear, was pretty definite, and after consultation with Dwarf and Lennard, Pitcher decided to refuse the offer Swears had made.

One Wednesday evening in 1912, Walter Dickson came up to me in the foyer of the Empire.

"I hear John has sold the paper," he said in surprise.

"It's news to me," I laughed.

"Well, young de Wend Fenton is here in a box with a crowd who are toasting him in champagne as the editor and proprietor of the 'Pink 'Un.'"

On Thursday, the publishing day, the first to arrive was

Colonel Newnham-Davis, to whom I told what I had heard the previous evening.

"The old ruffian!" he exploded, "so *that* explains why he has been hiding down at Charlton Court for the last few weeks! But he's coming up to-day, and I'll tackle him about it."

Pitcher received the news with a curt descriptive comment on Fenton, who, since his emergence from Oxford, had been warned off the Turf, although he had, after a period, obtained reinstatement; while Lennard was frankly sceptical. On Corlett's arrival, contrary to his usual custom, he went straight to his own room, and thither Newnham-Davis followed him.

In a few minutes Dwarf returned.

"It's quite true," he informed us. "Fenton is the new editor and proprietor, and I've given John a piece of my mind. He pretends that he's very cut up about the whole thing, and his story is that some months ago Fenton offered him £500 for an option on the paper. John vows that he never thought the option would be taken up, and that it was simply a case of pocketing £500, but yesterday they paid the first instalment of the purchase money. I told him I wouldn't go on with Fenton, and left him."

At this moment the clerk arrived with the usual little white envelopes, and the usual invitation to lunch. The invitation was coldly declined, and the staff proceeded to lunch together, while old John was driven to eat alone, a proceeding he abominated. On his return to the office, he found on his desk four pink envelopes containing four resignations, each breathing a haughty "more in sorrow than in anger" note. He left for Charlton without seeing us again.

The last few weeks of the old *régime* were piquant. As a great favour the staff consented to carry on their duties until the actual transfer to Fenton, and the intercourse between them and their proprietor was one of stately tolerance and indifference. I honestly think that John was acutely miserable. "I didn't mean there to be any change," he complained once, when relations had softened to permit of a little unofficial intercourse. "I sold the thing as a going concern, and the staff will go on just the same under the new proprietor."

To which Pitcher, who had most certainly the right to feel aggrieved, retorted with a brisk word-picture of the new proprietor. Poor Binstead was irreconcilable, and with reason.

He had been prevented, by hints which certainly were strong ones, from launching out on his own under the most favourable circumstances, and, as he complained, had, without a word or a hint, been handed over the counter like a packet of pins to a man whose reputation stank in the nostrils of the worlds in which Pitcher moved and lived. He would have nothing to do with Fenton, and little to say to John.

The last publishing day was sheer comedy.

John's invitation to a final lunch at Romano's was, after deliberation, accepted, and he and Lennard drove off together while Newnham-Davis and I walked. Pitcher was finishing some letters, and said that he would follow on in a few minutes. As Dwarf and I entered the restaurant we found the other two seated, and four vacant places. Barely had we seated ourselves, when Fenton arrived, occupied the third seat, and was promptly introduced to us. We were trapped. The old man's diplomacy had for the moment beaten us. I looked round for Binstead. At that moment he entered the restaurant, and, as he caught sight of the table and of Fenton, he stopped in the entrance, turned on his heel, and left. So far as I know it was his last sight of his old editor and proprietor.

De Wend Fenton's methods of conducting the old paper were not precisely those of John Corlett, and a contributor whose "stuff" had duly appeared grew tired of writing appeals for the cheque. At last he determined to call in person.

"Look here," he said firmly, "which is it to be: legal or physical violence?"

He was paid.

Under the Fenton *régime* the old paper speedily degenerated, and the amount John finally received as purchase price was ludicrous. Had they been consulted, the staff could have raised double the amount. Within a few weeks the new editor and proprietor was "up" at the Mansion House for indecency, and I think the record of a fine on such a charge hurt old John more than anything else in the whole business. The Fenton directorate did not last long, and then, a vastly depreciated property, the paper passed through several hands until it fell to the present proprietors, under whose direction it would seem that the very difficult task of restoring a lost prestige has been accomplished.

"Damn it all," exclaimed Pitcher, as the four of us discussed old days, "we'll have a paper of our own! Are you fellows

game?" We were, and it was at once decided to start our own little "show." As to the commercial side of the venture we were cheerfully ignorant; beyond the idea of raising a few hundreds between us the financial side was barely considered. As we sat and talked, the thing seemed accomplished.

The idea of starting a paper of our own was not originally based on business principles at all. For years the four of us had met regularly; had, to a certain extent, lived our lives and had our interests in common, and, strange as it may seem to the somewhat jealous world of modern journalism, we had grown to possess a sincere affection for one another. The idea of breaking up what had come to be a valued fellowship, a little club of a curiously intimate nature, was not to be tolerated, and the obvious solution seemed to be a newspaper.

The next few weeks were amusing.

As our intention became known, several mysterious approaches were made to us, and one in particular lives in my memory as a quaint instance of the lambs escaping the wolves. A mysterious foreign financier was willing to do everything; to supply the sinews of war, to leave the conduct of the paper in our hands, to rely on us entirely—in all matters save one. And that one matter was that he desired what he termed a "strong" financial page, a feature of which were to be city "tips," and that page was to be absolutely his province. Four men more completely innocent of City knowledge than the four ex-Pink 'Uns it would be impossible to collect in one room, and as the proviso was enunciated we glanced at one another. We scented the wolf, and effected a decent retirement. A year or two later, the philanthropist became involved in some tricky City proceedings which ended in the courts, so the lambs' reluctance was justified.

Another week passed, and Pitcher went down to Brighton to spend the week-end at the Royal York with Harry Preston. To a big circle of Londoners, Harry Preston and the Royal York *are* Brighton. The kindly, soft-voiced little man, with the twinkling eyes and the wonderful hand-shake which gives you the impression that you are the long-lost brother whose arrival has been anxiously awaited for years, and is the one event necessary to complete the happiness of the hand's owner, was an old friend of each of us, and our intention was no secret to him. He had, I fancy, mentioned it in his circle, and Harry Preston's circle is a large one, comprising potentates and pugi-

lists, peers and commoners, painters and penmen, the Turf, the Stage and the political arena. A universal favourite, he can in all sincerity and kindness of heart be all things to all men.

And Harry Preston has "the manner" when dealing with great personages.

The Prince of Wales was about to leave Prince's one evening, and found that his car had not arrived.

"Will you honour me by using mine, sir?" asked Preston.

The Prince accepted and got in.

"Why," he exclaimed, seating himself, "your car is twice as big as mine!"

Denial was futile.

"Ah," said Harry blandly, "but then Harrod's is bigger than Buckingham Palace, sir."

Staying at the Royal York on the occasion of Pitcher's visit was Kennedy Jones. "K.J." had been told of the *Sporting Times* sale; the idea of a newspaper staff solemnly "firing" its proprietor had tickled him immensely, and he was full of questions.

"What are you fellows going to do, Pitch?" he asked as they sat in the lounge.

"Start a paper of our own," replied Binstead promptly.

"How much money have you got?"

"Oh, we can raise a few hundreds between us," replied Pitcher airily, and was proceeding, when "K.J." interrupted him with a shout of laughter.

"Have any of you any idea of what a paper costs?" he asked, and the potential editor was obliged to admit his ignorance.

"Well," said "K.J.," "I wouldn't start a daily without half-a-million in cash—and I'd spend every ha'penny of it in the first year."

"Oh, we shall do with less than that!" observed Pitcher curtly. "K.J." was silent for a minute.

"I'll tell you what I'll do!" he said impetuously. "I'll start you fellows with five thousand. Found a small company; two thousand five hundred and one shares shall be mine and you can divide the two thousand, four hundred and ninety-nine between you. If you make a success you can buy me out for what I put in, and the thing will be your own."

So the next morning I received a wire:

"Have got five thousand in one hand. Meet me Cavour seven. Pitch."

HARRY PRESTON, JACK DEMPSEY, AND FRIEND

For sheer amusement and excitement let me recommend to the *blasé* the starting of a new paper. It is not a cheap amusement, but it is unique in its novelty, and in the attendant spirit of adventure. The first difficulty to be surmounted is, of course, the name.

It is no joke finding an attractive title for a new paper, and the late W. T. Stead thought he had discovered a very clever, if rather tricky title for a venture of his which he christened "The Daily Paper." "Boy, give me a daily paper!" you call to the juvenile Smith & Son, and the idea was, of course, that he would bring Stead's.

Stead was not the first proprietor to be tricky in his title. There is printed in *The Times* and other papers every day an official communication headed "Court Circular," which gives in an authoritative manner the movements of the Royal Family. George Maddick, who founded those prosperous journals, the *Sporting Life* and the *English Mechanic*, the harvest of which he did not reap, saw in this an idea, and he produced a newspaper which he called the *Court Circular*. It caught on wonderfully with advertisers, but one is bound to admit that George Maddick knew a good deal more about Wine Office Court than he did of the Court of St. James's.

At last the initial difficulties were surmounted and *Town Topics* was born.

For the critical first year of a paper's existence the youngster did well, and we all saw fortune within our reach. Lennard, as racing editor, by a combination of good judgment and luck—and every racing editor must ultimately depend on luck—forecasted in his racing editorials the winners of practically all the big races, and the circulation began steadily to mount. But Fate was stalking poor little *Town Topics* with a bludgeon, and soon the blows began to fall. The outbreak of war deprived it at one swoop of its valuable advertising revenue, the backbone of every paper.

"If you fellows will stick it, I'll stick it!" said "K.J." at a conference at which we decided to economise and carry on.

But his own paper came to him too late for Arthur Binstead. He was a sick and failing man when it started, and grew steadily worse.

He came down to the editorial room to attend the usual conference on the paper of the week some three weeks before his death, and, as usual, he and I drove away together. He

had seen his doctors that morning; what the verdict had been I knew, and he knew that I knew. We drove in silence, and Pitcher gazed through the windows at the streets of the London he loved. Then he flung back his shoulders. "My boy," he said gravely, "it's a man's will that keeps him going." And in that sentence was the history of months of suffering.

Colonel Newnham-Davis stepped into Pitcher's place as editor, and Edgar Wallace, who had joined the tiny band some little time previously, became assistant editor. Fate struck again. The Colonel rejoined the colours, first as a captain, and then resumed his old rank and eventually took charge of the interned prisoners at Alexandra Palace. Soon after he left us he wrote me: "What with drilling the men I have got morning and evening, and recruiting in the suburbs most nights, I am living rather a dog's life just now, but in a perverse way I am enjoying it. I don't suppose I shall go down to Alexandra Palace to live for another three weeks. I shall be glad when this intermediate stage is over. I have marched both my subalterns off their feet and am a bit footsore myself."

Then the fine old Dwarf died, killed in war as surely as if he had been struck down by a German bullet, and Edgar Wallace became editor.

Wallace would have been an ideal editor for such a paper in happier times and under a lesser handicap, for surely no more versatile writer lives. He always seemed to me to be an all-round specialist. Had he been caught young and kept, he might have been a fine poet—amid the flood of war verse that was poured out little stands out in one's memory, and amongst that little are some of Wallace's verses published in *Town Topics*. He has written novels which have made their mark; a war correspondent of outstanding ability, a writer of plays, of films and of revue, a journalist *par excellence*, a student of racing and of life generally, Edgar Wallace is a marvel of efficient versatility.

So the paper carried on, every member of its tiny staff working like a demon under four of five different aliases. Wallace, as "Attaché," wrote long leading articles on military and political subjects which, in the light of after happenings, showed uncanny prevision, brilliant little verses for the front page, and humorous "Tommy" stories under the title of "Smithy"; Lennard wrote pages on sport in war-time, on politics, and a long and interesting series of theatrical and racing reminis-

cences which caught on; the veteran "Bill" Mackay contributed articles on London life, when it was life, and I myself wrote as a disreputable lady of revue—"Billie Tuchaud"—as an Amurrican citizen, Hiram D. Punk, and as John Wilkes, and, with Mackay's help, ran the front page. It was a strenuous life.

Then Wallace left us, and Francis Stopford assumed the editorship.

Another blow from Fate, and, in a nursing home, I heard of the sudden collapse of Horace Lennard in the street, and of his death in hospital.

Still the little paper struggled on, but in a changed world. Its old staff, and the staff of the old "Pink 'Un," wrote of the life they lived and loved, but in the darkness of war that life was lost. The lights were all turned low; the savour and the sparkle were gone.

Fate struck again, and Kennedy Jones died.

Then the paper was sold, and in the first issue under the new proprietorship I thought I read its doom. In heavy black letters on the first page appeared a head-line: "The New Regimé." A mere printer's error, no doubt, but ominous.

Again Fate struck, and little *Town Topics* followed the old *Globe* and the dozens of other papers killed by the war. But it had made a good fight, and its casualties were heavy.

THE END

APPENDIX

DATES AND DITTIES

Many disputes about the dates of songs and their singers will be settled by the following chronological details supplied by Mr George Belmont, a living encyclopædia of music-hall history.

In 1867 and 1868, Leybourne sang "The Rollicking Rams," "I'll have your Hat," "Burgundy Benjamin," "She Danced Like a Fairy," "Not To-day, Baker," "Champagne Charley," "The Flying Trapeze," "Mouse Traps," "Turkey Rhubarb," and "Pop, Pop, or Sparkling Wine."

In 1870, he sang "Up in a Balloon, Boys," "The Lancashire Lass," "If Ever I Cease to Love," and "Up in a Monument."

Michael Abrahams was the first to discover George Leybourne (then "Joe Saunders") at the Lord Nelson, Whitechapel Road, and secured him for the Apollo Music Hall, Brick Lane. In 1860, Saunders was allowed to sell copies of his songs at the Apollo. As an attraction for his benefit at the Alhambra, Sheffield, in January, 1881, when the Brothers Belmont (George being one) were engaged with him, he hired an auctioneer to sell twenty five-pound notes on the stage. Some of them were sold for more, and some less, than their face value. Altogether the sale resulted in £105 10s. It was a clever ruse to attract attention. At this period he was in a poor way, and died on September 15th, 1884.

In the programme of the Royal Music Hall, December, 1877, Leybourne sang "Captain Cuff," "Encore," and "The Man in the Moon is Looking, Love."

It was in 1868 that Nellie Power sang "The Fisherman's Daughter that Lives O'er the Water"; G. W. Moore, "The Ten Little Nigger Boys"; Lingard, "On the Beach at Brighton"; Vance, "Pull Together," "Act on the Square," "The Husband's Boat"; Sidney Barnes, "Tommy Dodd"; Jolly John Nash, "I Couldn't Help Laughing, It Tickled Me So." The same year, the London Pavilion, under Loibl and Sonnehammer, celebrated its eighth annual and the Maison Dorée changed its name to the Bedford Music Hall.

It was at the Sun Music Hall, under the management of E. Williams, in 1877, that Macdermott first sang his famous "We Don't want to Fight" song. He also sang in that year "On the Strict Q.T.," "Did You Ever Catch a Weasel Asleep?" and "Dear Old Pals." Macdermott started in Dover as third man at 21s. a week. From there he migrated to the Oriental (now Queen's) and was known as Gilbert Hastings (real name, Farrell). His first drama was "Weeds and Flowers of Erin," produced in Liverpool in 1870, afterwards at the Grecian in August of the same year. "Driven From Home"—not the play with the celebrated steam sawmill scene—was his third essay. In conjunction with Harry Pettitt he wrote "Brought to Book" and produced and played in it at the Britannia Theatre, Hoxton, on May 8th, 1871. In the second week the title was altered to "Civil and Military." In this he played Captain O'Connor, and sang "What Would You Do, Love?" Before the month was out he was at the London Pavilion, Royal, and South London, where he sang a new version of his famous "Scamp" song, and "Hildebrand Montrose."

In 1877 Fred Coyne was singing "It's Nice," "If We Could Only See Through the Keyhole," and "Whoa, Emma!" Fred Foster, "The Duchess of Devonshire"; Mr and Mrs Lennard Charles, "Meet Me By Moonlight" and "List to the Music Stealing"; Marie Loftus, "A Cantineer of the Irish Brigade"; W. J. Ashcroft, "The Solid Man" and "I Haven't Been Home This Morning"; Henri Clarke, "The Amatory Frenchman," "Heathen Chinee," and "Mad Butcher"; Arthur Roberts, "If I were Only Long Enough," "Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady," "No, No, Fathead!" etc. Fred Albert, "The Turkey and the Bean," "You Can't Have Too Much of a Jolly Good Thing," at five halls. (The record is held by Sam Mayo, who did nine turns in one evening, viz.: Bedford, Euston, Holborn, Tivoli, Gatti's, Standard, Holborn, Euston, and Bedford.) Arthur Lloyd sang "For Goodness' Sake Don't Say I Told You"; Sam Torr, "Same Old Game," and "Baby's Got a Tooth"; Charles Coborn, "What Did Your Mother Say, Johnny, My Lad?" etc. Vesta Tilley, then only thirteen years old, was touring with her father, Harry Ball, and his comical canine, "Fathead"; Pat Feeney, "Mary Ann," and "The Man With One Eye"; J. W. Rowley, "Birds in a Tree," "Going to Hampstead in a Van," and "Roley Poley Over"; Sam Redfern discoursing on "Women"; Mrs

F. R. Phillips, "When the Pigs Begin to Fly"; Charles Williams, "The Quarrel in the Menagerie," and "Spelling B."; Jenny Hill, "I've Been a Good Woman to You"; Herbert Campbell, "Naughty, Naughty, Naughty Johnny Morgan," "Keep it Dark," and this parody on Macdermott's war song, written by Henry Pettitt:

> "I don't want to fight, I'll be slaughtered if I do;
> I'll change my togs, I'll sell my kit, and pop my rifle, too.
> I don't like the war; I ain't a 'Briton true,'
> And I'll let the Russians have Constantinople!"

G. H. Chirgwin was then one of the Brothers Chirgwin. He started on his own at the Oxford, June 10, 1878. Rose Fox was choreographing in "Skiptomania" at the Oxford; Trewey was *the* juggler. Seventeen years later he first introduced to the British public the Living Pictures at the Empire Theatre; Vance—who sang his last song on Boxing Day, 1888, at the old Sun—and Rickards were touring. A week or so before the latter came to the Bedford (under the proprietorship of George Fredericks) he went bankrupt and was going through the courts. One night, while he was singing the chorus of "I Never Go East Of Temple Bar," there came a voice from the "gods": "How did you get to Basinghall Street, then?"—the site of the old Bankruptcy Court. On January 25th, Rickards became lessee and manager of the South Hackney Music Hall (Scott's); Annie Adams, Liskard and Leybourne appeared there under his management. In this year (1870) G. W. Moore was singing "Ada With the Golden Hair"; Rickards, "Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines"; Kate Santley, "The Bells go Ringing for Sarah," and "Sparkling Wine," and Vance, "Walking in the Zoo," "Chickaleary Cove," "Pretty Polly," "Pal o' Mine," "Slap Bang!" and "The Late Lamented Jones."

The catch-phrase, "Get Your Hair Cut," was sung at the Sebright, Hackney Road (now a picture palace) on May 25th, 1891, by George Beauchamp, who first appeared in London in 1887. He died, quite a wreck, on December 28th, 1900, at the age of thirty-eight. It was at the Sebright that Marie Lloyd, early in 1886, appeared at the stage door to see if Belmont could put her on, which he did one night, and she made such a success that she was engaged for the following week. The proprietor introduced her that evening to George Ware, who

for many years secured her contracts and wrote many of her songs, including " The Boy I Love Is Up In The Gallery."

And here are some more of the typical choruses which brought fame and money to the singers, and have left cheery memories in many an elderly and middle-aged heart:

" I strolled one day to Westminister
The Royal Aquarium to see;
But I had to stand a bottle
To lubricate the throttle
Of a lady who was forty-three.

Chorus—With his ' Verily, verily, verily,
Verily,' the beak said, ' I say unto thee,
I shall fine you forty shillings
For your cooings and your billings,'
And his mammy had to pay the penalty."

—*Arthur Roberts.*

One of Arthur Roberts' earliest songs was " More or Less," and he used to do a tuneful whistle in the middle of a line.

" I like a glass of water, but I like it best with gin
(Tuneful whistle) More or less, etc."

Another of his later songs, and a very popular one, had for its chorus:

" Oh, stand me a cab-fare, Duckie.
Oh, do—now, there's a dear!
Oh, buy me a hot potato,
I feel so awfully queer.
Your eyes are dreadfully wicked,
But kissing I don't allow;
I might have done so a few months ago,
But I'm living with mother now! "

Which was a very popular chorus indeed in the old Pelican days.

These are the concluding lines of one of Arthur Roberts' early ditties, and those who heard it can perhaps " auralise " (if one

may coin a word) the throaty falsetto with which the last line was delivered:

"The electric light will shortly take its place
And show up the fake on each pretty fairy's face,
And upset their apple-carts in Waterloo Place—
Which is tidings of comfort and joy."

Another favourite of the same comedian's:

"If I were only long enough, a soldier I would be
And fight for my country and be revenged on she.
And if the war should break out, she'd never see me more.
I'd away, I'd away, I'd be off to the war."

Also:

"I'm going to do without 'em,
I won't have any more.
I'm going to do without 'em
As lots have done before,
I'm going to be a martyr
On a very moral plan.
And all you boys and girls will shout
Oh, what a nice young man, man, man!
Oh, what a nice young man!"

The vogue of the fascinating "sisters," with song and dance, has long passed away, but the Leamars, the Biltons and the Jonghmanns—to name no others—disputed popularity with the loudest of the "lions" of their day.

Perhaps the classic Leamar ditty was:

"At Romano's—Italiano's.
It's a Paradise in the Strand.
At Romano's—as Papa knows—
Where the wines and the women are grand."

Also:

"Go and inform your father,
Won't he be angry—rather!
Tell him the truth,
Mention the youth.
Say how you feel.
Nothing conceal.
So go and inform your dad."

But on occasions the Sisters could desert archness for bathos. On the wreck of the "London" they were topical:

"Mothers were sighing,
Children were crying,
Husbands were trying
Their dear ones to save.
Brave Captain Knowles
With three hundred poor souls
Went down to a wateree grave!"

And the fascinating Biltons, one of whom became a peeress, used to sing:

"Meet me to-night, when the moon shines bright,
Meet me to-night, dear, and let us make love.
I shall be waiting, anxiously waiting,
Down by the may-tree that blooms in the grove
Ready to wander wherever you rove.

Not to-night! Not to-night! It must be some other time!
I'm not in a dancing mood, young man,
I trust you will not be rude, young man.
Say good-bye, say good-bye; yes, you can if you try.
Well, take a kiss, if that's any bliss,
For I've got just one to spare!"

While the fair Leamars countered with:

"Why is the world so gay to-day?"

and—

"Oh, the harem! The harem!
Did you ever hear tell of the harem?
I take it, no doubt, you are glad we got out,
For we've just escaped from the harem."

And here is a batch of old-time favourite choruses:

"He wears a penny flower in his coat, la-di-da!
And a penny paper collar round his throat, la-di-da!
In his hand a penny stick, in his tooth a penny pick,
And a penny in his pocket, la-di-da!"

—*Nellie Power.*

Others of Nellie Power's favourites were "Tiddy fol lol!" and:

"The boy that I love is up in the gallery!
There he is! Don't you see?
Waving his handkerchie!"

which was afterwards sung by Marie Lloyd in her early days.

In those days the "masher" had uncomfortably tight trousers, and would not have been properly turned out without a crutch stick. He also generally indulged in a tooth-pick, and was known as one of the "crutch and toothpick brigade." Many of the songs referred to his little eccentricities, *e.g.*,

"How do you like London, how do you like town?
How do you like the Strand, dear, now Temple Bar's pulled down?
How do you like the lardi-da, the toothpick and the crutch?
How did you get those trousers on, and did they hurt you much?"

"Oh, Johnny, don't you go to sea!
Oh, Johnny, stay at home with me!
For if you go to sea, you surely will be drowned
And sink to the bottom, and never be found!"

—*Nellie Power.*

"Quack, quack, quack, go the pretty little ducks,
The hen's cluck, cluck, is their warning.
When the old cock crows, then everybody knows
There's eggs for your breakfast in the morning.

Jack, Jack, Jack, come back, back, back
And hear the pretty ducks go quack, quack, quack.
Come home from sea and marry me
And never mind the money!"

—*Nellie Power.*

The last line of which contains a highly admirable sentiment!

" Tommy, make room for your Uncle, there's a little dear!
Tommy, make room for your Uncle, I want him to sit near.
You know Mama has got a bun, and that she'll give it you.
So don't annoy, be a good boy, make room for your uncle, do!"

—W. B. Fair.

And if the superior should sneer, it is as well to point out that this song of Bill Fair's received immortality at the hands of one of the greatest of Victorian poets, Robert Browning:

" Treading down rose and ranunculus
You ' Tommy-make-room-for-your-Uncle '-us,
Troop—all of you! man or homunculus!"

" When you leave here you'll go down with a pal
Later on (whistle) later on.
Down Piccadilly as far as the Mall
Later on (whistle) later on.
Then you'll meet the girls in the trickiest of styles,
That they live in the West they'll inform you with smiles,
But don't you believe it, for they doss down in the Dials
Later on."

—Harry Randall.

" I am the ghost of John James Christopher Benjamin Binns.
I was cut down right in the midst of my sins.
Now my home is down below.
I'm let out for an hour or so;
But when the cock begins to crow,
Farewell Benjamin Binns!"

—Harry Randall.

" For the sake of the little ones at home,
For the sake of the little ones at home,
I went in to get some bread,
But I pinched the till instead,
For the sake of the little ones at home!"

—Harry Randall.

"Ours is a happy, happy home;
I wish I was a kipper in the foam;
There's no carpet on the floor
And no knocker on the door;
Ours is a happy, happy home!'

—*Harry Randall.*

"Up went the price of girls, ya, ha, ha!
Up went the price of girls, ya, ha, ha!
There's an awful lot of trouble on the young man's mind—
They've raised the price of girls!"

—*Harry Randall.*

"Down in a cottage near a wood
Dwelt a maiden young and good,
Never had cause to grieve or sigh
Till that noble lord came nigh.
She said: 'Dear lord, I feel so queer,
P'raps it's the home-made ginger-beer!'"

—*Sam Redfern.*

"He isn't a marrying man, my love;
He lives on a different plan, my love.
Keep out of his way if you can, my love,
He isn't a marrying man."

—*James Fawn.*

"They're all very fine and large,
Fat and lean and thin;
You may think that you can beat 'em,
But you can't take them in.
They're the finest in creation,
And we make no extra charge.
So who's going in for a dozen or so?
They're all very fine and large!"

—*Herbert Campbell.*

"Now we're busy, now we're busy,
Keep on like this and our fortune's made;
Now we're busy, now we're busy,
Aren't we doing a roaring trade?"

—*Herbert Campbell.*

"Walk this way, step this way,
Sale now on, there's a grand display.
Upon my word, we're giving them away!
Step this way, madam, walk this way!"

—*Dan Leno.*

"Brown caught a gudgeon,
Jones caught a pike,
Robinson he caught a crab and upset the lot;
They caught rheumatics to last them for life,
And I shall cop something else when I meet the wife."

—*Herbert Campbell.*

"In the B-u-r-l-i-n-g-t-o-n
Meet me to-morrow night at half-past ten,
And the secret of my heart I'll tell you then,
In the B-u-r-l-i-n-t-o-n."

—*Vance.*

"The good young man who died, my friend,
The good young man who died;
Chewed tobacco—that he did,
And he saved up every quid,
Did the good young man who died."

—*Slade Murray.*

"I've been and got married to-day,
It makes me feel so jolly.
I've been and got married to-day,
So a fig for melancholy.
The bells will ring, so we'll dance and sing
And pass the time away.
It makes me feel all over alike,
I've been and got married to-day."

—*T. W. Barrett.*

"So I got across a gee-gee and started right away,
Tally ho! and then I blew a gentle strain—
(*three blasts on a penny trumpet*)
But the mare I could not stop her,
On my head I fell a cropper,
And I'll make a bet I don't get on that gee-gee's back again."

—*T. W. Barrett.*

Another of Barret's :

" Oh, what a fool I must have been to marry Jane.
She took me for a crackpot, that is very plain.
She even said I was no good ; said I was a log of wood.
Oh, that false, deceitful Jenny Johnson."

Perhaps his best known, the first line of which passed into a popular catch-word—the supreme test of popularity—was :

" He's got 'em on ! He's got 'em on !
Don't he try to do the heavy ?
He's got 'em on ! He's got 'em on !
He's the Don at every levee.
He's got 'em on ! He's got 'em on !
Ain't he got a funny chevee ?
I declare he's all there,
And he's got 'em on ! "

" Musha, bad luck to the gamblin', for I'm in a funny fix ;
Out of four pound nine and sixpence, I've on'y three and six.
But come down to the corner, and I'll stand a glass of grog,
And dhrink damnation sorrer to Dan Murphy's runnin' dog."
—*Pat Feeney.*

" Work, boys, work and be contented,
As long as you've enough to buy a meal :
The man, you may rely, will be wealthy by and by
Who will only put his shoulder to the wheel."
—*Harry Clifton.*

And here are a few more choruses of Clifton's, to whom E. V. Lucas alludes in his delightful little book, " A Boswell of Baghdad." Mr Lucas refers to the success of Clifton's songs as being appalling, but goes on to say : " The songs of the sixties are much better things than most of the songs of our enlightened day. They seem to have had character, a humorous sententiousness, and a genial view of life. . . . Clifton seems to have had three distinct lines : the comic song, of which ' Pretty Polly Perkins ' may be considered the best example ; the Irish song, and the motto song, inculcating a sweet reasonableness and content amid life's many trials and tribulations."

The chorus of " A Motto for Every Man " runs :

" We cannot all fight in this battle of life,
The weak must go to the wall ;
So do to each other the thing that is right
For there's room in the world for all."

" As beautiful as a butterfly,
As fair as a queen,
Was pretty Polly Perkins
Of Paddington Green."

" Then do your best for one another,
Making life a pleasant dream ;
Help a worn and weary brother,
Pulling hard against the stream."

" Then try to be happy and gay, my boys,
Remember the world is wide.
And Rome wasn't built in a day, my boys,
So wait for the turn of the tide."

" Then what is the use of repining ?—
For where there's a will there's a way :
And to-morrow the sun may be shining,
Although it is cloudy to-day."

" Then love your neighbour as yourself,
As the world you go travelling through ;
And never sit down with a tear or a frown,
But paddle your own canoe."

" Yes, I am one of the olden time,
And may be thought too slow,
But give to me the good old days
Of fifty years ago.
Yes, give to me the good old days
Of fifty years ago."

" Waste not, want not, a maxim I would teach,
Let your watchword be despatch, and practise what you preach.
Never let your chances like sunbeams pass you by,
For you'll never miss the water till the well's run dry."

Other once popular songs of Clifton's were: " The Dark Girl Dressed in Blue," " Could I Live My Time Over Again," " It's Not The Miles We Travel But The Pace That Kills," and " The Calico Printer's Clerk."

One of Charles Godfrey's favourites was " The Masher King," with its genuine reflections of the ideals of the day. The chorus appears to have been varied, and here are one or two selections:

" Strut up the Strand-ity, cane in my hand-ity, doing the grand-ity swellah;
Very much Baronly, see Nelly Farrenly, short dresses and boots rather tall.
Smoke a cigar-ity, with the Majah-ity, dwiddle and dwaddle and drawl;
I'm a push-ity, shove-ity, lov-ity, dov-ity,
Hottest young mashah of all! "

Another:

" I'm a Rotten Row ride-ity, hat on one side-ity,
Glass in my eye-dity, swell-ah;
Trouble to talk-ity, ditto to walk-ity,
Swag-ity, creep-ity, crawl.
Pet of Society, little variety,
Hi-trala-liety fellah!
A ram-ity, lamb-ity, jam-ity, dam-ity,
Jamiest mashah of all! "

And yet another:

" I'm a dashing old chap-ity, go you at nap-ity,
Slip-ity, slap-ity fellah:
Hip-hip-hooray-ity, inside the Gaiety,
' Beg yours, sir, this is my stall! '

Gaiter of drab-ity, gift of the gab-ity,
Row with the cab-ity fellah,
Rick-ity, rack-ity, trick-ity, track-ity,
Prize medal mashah of all ! "

Here is the real patriotic touch :

" We're brothers of the self-same race,
Speakers of the self-same tongue,
With the same brave hearts that feel no fears
From fighting sires of a thousand years ;
Folks say ' What will Britain do ? '
Will she rest with her banners furled ?
No ! No ! ! No ! ! !
When we go to meet the foe
It's the English-speaking race against the world ! "

In different vein :

" She was fair, with golden hair,
She wore a little bonnet trimmed with blue,
This charming little Totty.
She nearly drove me dotty,
For all she could say was ' Parlez-vous ? ' "

More of the patriotic :

" Here upon guard am I,
Willing to do or to die !
Something is creeping along the way,
Treachery there is nigh !
Steady my aim shall be !
Nearer it crawls to me.
My trigger I pull it,
He's accepted my bullet,
He'll never more speak again ! "

" With a dauntless heart to war he goes,
With kindling eye he meets his foes.
His flashing sword does ne'er repose,
When bitter warfare wages.

He stands erect in manhood's prime,
Protecting England's cause sublime,
His is the bravest and manliest time,
In Shakespeare's Seven Ages."

And a great favourite:

"Fighting with the 7th Royal Fusiliers,
Oh, gallant Fusiliers;
Through deadly Russian shot
And Cossack spears
We carved our way to glory."

And continuing in the patriotic vein, here is a ditty which was all the rage during the first Sudan campaign, sung by Nellie Farrell—"The Glittering Star of Erin"—wife of Pat Feeney. The "Tommies" of those days loved it, and it was, and is still, sung at barrack concerts the world over, for your "Tommy" of the good old school fairly wallows in the pathetic:

"Over the burning plains of Egypt,
Under the scorching sun,
He thought of the tales he'd have to tell
His love when the fight was won.
She treasured with care
That dear lock of hair.
For her own darling laddie she prayed.
But her tears are in vain,
For she'll ne'er see again
Her lad in the Scotch Brigade!"

Another of Nellie Farrell's:

"We are still staunch and true to the red, white and blue,
Our loyalty is as firm as a rock.
The sorrows of to-day will to-morrow pass away,
For one black sheep will never spoil a flock!"

One wonders how Jimmy Fawn's anti-teetotal song, "The Yellow Ribbon Army," would "go" in these days:

"Hurrah for the ribbon of yellow, and down with the ribbon of blue!
Three cheers for each moderate fellow, who can lower a gallon or two!

We never would think of refusing a drink,
Or turning good liquor away.
We are lovers—Hear! Hear!—of a drop of good beer,
So the Yellow Rag Army, Hooray!!"

Another of Jimmy's:

"Only one—just one—new song I've got.
Only one—don't say it's Tommy Rot.
Through this one I'll quickly run,
Don't you wish I'd ne'er begun?
But thank your stars I'll soon be done,
It's only one!"

"The ship went down to the bottom of the sea.
There was only one that came ashore, and that was me.
I came across a whale, and sat upon his tail,
And it brought me home to marry Jenny Jones."
—*Harry Rickards.*

Only middle-aged men would remember Harry Rickards, who died in 1911 at the age of 63. Originally at the old Raglan, opposite Lamb's, Conduit Street, he budded into a lion comique under Charles Morton at the Oxford—the Oxford that the flames licked up in 1868. Three of his most popular songs were "Oxford Joe," "Cerulea was Beautiful," and "Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines." Emigrating to Melbourne many years ago, Rickards, with a very small capital, laid the foundations of a considerable fortune, and to his credit be it said, he never saw a brother or sister artist stranded.

Harry, whom any boat from the Pacific was likely to land at Plymouth, dropped into London one day at the time of Miss Maud Allan's sensational "boom" at the Palace. Quick to grasp a success, he got a much cheaper dancing girl, soaked her in the Salome lore, and—shifted her to Australia. And when, weeks afterwards, he himself reached Melbourne, the man whose opinion he held highest observed:

"Harry, old man, you're evidently a damn sight more easily pleased than Herod of Galilee!"

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